

Punch

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The new 38,000 ton 'Windsor Castle' is back on Friday from her maiden voyage to the Cape. She is now the flagship of the Union-Castle fleet—the big, extremely comfortable liners which leave Southampton every Thursday afternoon and

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The London Charivari

THE curious exchange between Mrs. Nixon and Mrs. Kennedy about which would-be First Lady spent less on clothes made me realize that the United States goes in for conspicuous consumption three years out of four but in election year turns homespun.

Let Down by Art

A TRADERS' association in Liverpool asked a sculptor for a statue likely to attract people to a shopping centre, and what did they get? A tortured nude which had to be removed amid cries of "Disgusting!" I know just how they feel. When Lorenzo the Magnificent asked for a statue nobody fobbed him off with a petrified fœtus or an explosion in a barbed wire factory. Let the Association of Chambers of

learn, stung by taunts of over-seriousness, painted "Tasting the First Oyster" for fun, whereupon the pundits examined it with a microscope for an allegory of high purpose. Perhaps he really meant "Hope" to be a skit on



balloonists, and another artist saw "Love Locked Out" as a young nudist coming back late to camp without a week-end pass. On the reverse side of the argument "Bubbles" may have been Millais' farsighted vision of the shape of sputniks to come.

Something Borrowed, Something Blue

UNEASY lies the head that has no crown to wear, especially at a wedding, such as that of Princess Alexandra of Ysemburg to Prince Welf Heinrich von Hanover, for which our Queen lent the Princess a diamond headpiece. The popular image of a crown is of something sacred, enshrined and jealously guarded. The loan, admittedly, was of a decorative piece, not a crown of State, but even so there was a delightfully casual, almost sisterly, air about the transaction. The problem of a good fit did not arise because the borrowed emblem was about the size of an apple and sat on the back of the head.



Commerce find an old-fashioned sculptor (there must be one somewhere) to design a range of reasonably representational statues expressing the Spirit of Spending; perhaps a jolly nymph holding a sign: "Look! Fourpence Off!" The designs could be vetted by *Which?* and then sold at cost price.

Problem Pictures

A MAN of gravity making a joke is as misunderstood as a comedian going straight. G. F. Watts, we now



"How come all this say for K—I thought you dug Dag the most!"

Morris Dancing, Anybody?

THE British Travel and Holidays Association, answering criticisms that their "Come to Britain" advertisements are too full of swan-uppers and Beefeaters and other almost defunct institutions, plead that they cannot hope to give a complete picture of every aspect of British life. This seems rather a feeble and beg-the-question argument. I can think of a much stronger one; we are all proud of our historic heritage of pageantry and custom, and anxious that it should survive, provided it doesn't inconvenience us in any way. And where better than in the advertisements of the British Travel and Holidays Association?

The Fatal Muffin

AN American manufacturer is trying very hard to make his fellow countrymen eat muffins, in what he claims to be the English manner ("never slice an English muffin"). He also explains how to turn them into muffinburgers. Perhaps muffins, which one associated with more relaxed days, are just the thing to de-tense those caught up in the rat race. The manufacturer might have quoted Algernon in *The Importance of Being Earnest*: "One should always eat muffins quite calmly. It is the only way to eat them." Also he might have cautioned against muffin-madness. Boswell told of an addict with a bad stomach who woke one morning resolved on suicide. "He

ate three buttered muffins for breakfast before shooting himself, knowing that he should not be troubled with indigestion."

Memo for Mr. Marples

THE approach roads to a new underpass near Hanger Lane, Middlesex, are to be electrically heated in cold weather. Whose job will it be, I wonder, to get out of bed on a freezing night to switch the road on? Are we to have a new picture-sign denoting Hot Road Ahead (a road with a lot of little "z"s coming out of it)? Will it be thought necessary, on less privileged gradients, to put up signs like: "DEVIL'S ELBOW: THIS HILL IS UNHEATED"? I hope Mr. Marples has not rushed into this without thinking out all the implications.

Pilgrims in the Slough

POOR John Bunyan; none so poor to do him reverence now. A pilgrimage to Bedford planned for the 300th anniversary of his imprisonment is proving a damp squib. *Pilgrim's Progress*, which ran through ten editions in seven years, captivated the middle and lower classes but the highly educated would have none of it until years later. It was said to be the only example in literature of the top people eventually bowing to the verdict of the masses. But to-day a puritan might argue that the Welfare State has turned England into one big Vanity Fair and that Grace Abounding, the Delectable



"That was the password two minutes ago—try again."

Next week's
PUNCH
will contain contributions from
JAMES THURBER
STEPHEN POTTER
ALEX ATKINSON
PAUL DEHN

Mountains and the Enchanted Ground are all combined in the gleaming image of the Car Beautiful.

No Baldies

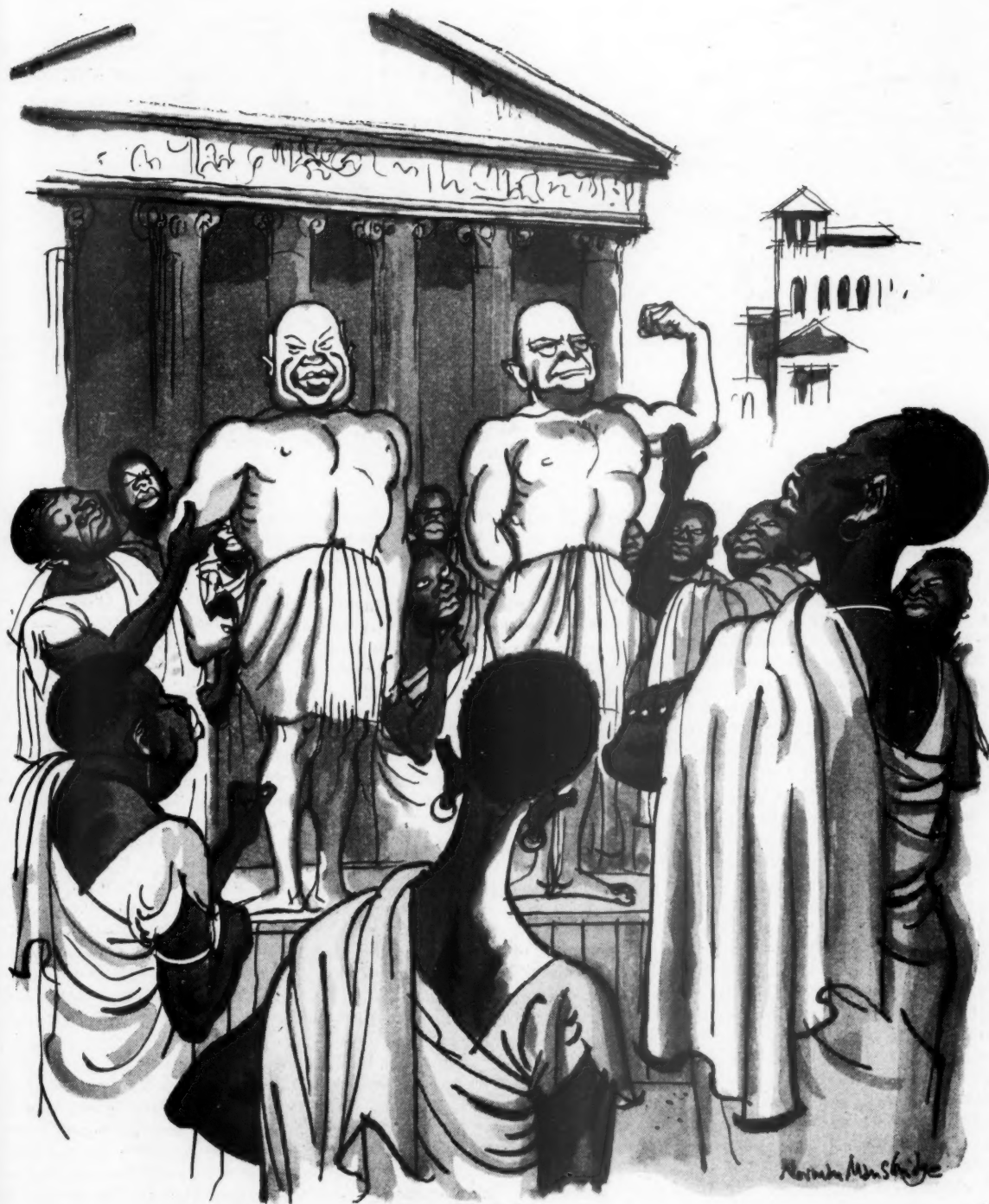
I'M sure that scrupulous fairness was exercised by the distinguished judges of the Brylcreem Cricket Awards, but I couldn't help noticing, as I stood on the crisp turf of a Café Royal carpet, watching the winners receive their cups from Denis Compton, that the whole lot of them, from Dexter (fastest century) to Walker (69 catches) possessed really wonderful heads of hair.

Gentlemen Pester Blondes

MISS BARBARA TAYLOR, the English actress who has withdrawn from a Hollywood starring part because they wanted her to play a mid-Western, hip-swinging dame, did not like having her hair dyed. "A girl," she said in memorable words, "loses all her privacy when she's a blonde." The brunette can move through city streets and rowdy parties like a ghost, contemplative, unpinched, free to follow the most solitary hobbies; but once a girl gets known as a blonde the public bang on her door, wander up her fire-escape, keep her telephone bell jangling, for all I know sit themselves down beside her in restaurants and even, perhaps, steam open her letters. Changing to raven locks, on the other hand, means, "Don't come up and see me any time."

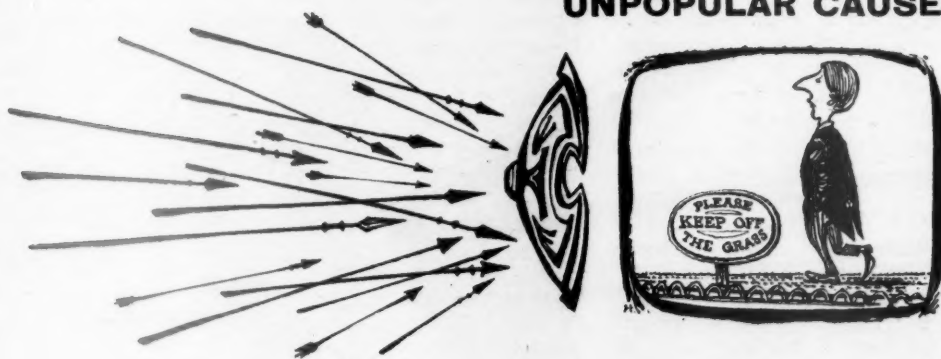
Armchair Theatres

I FEEL that the settlement of the Indus Waters dispute should not be allowed to pass without a mark of regret. It reduces still further the number of crisis points capable of making the headlines without any real danger of turning into World War III. Let's keep that Buraimi Oasis pot steadily simmering, for Pete's sake.
— MR. PUNCH



THE UNCOMMITTED

UNPOPULAR CAUSES



In Defence of
PRIVILEGE

by John Wain

PRIVILEGE is not difficult to defend, because even the most egalitarian societies have always recognized that it must be admitted to some extent. A privilege means, in practice, anything that suspends the normal laws governing a social group. The privileged person is marked out from the rest of the group by his immunity to one, or some, or all, of the rules which govern the lives of the rest.

We see privilege in its purest state if we look at a society that is governed by a single principle. Schoolboys, for example, organize their social groups entirely along physical lines: the strongest boy is the most respected, the weakest the most frequently maltreated; if there happens to be a boy who is not only weak but also ugly he is automatically victimized. The only exception is that sometimes a boy with a very attractive personality—unusually cheerful, or courageous, or amusing—will be accorded high rank even if he is not physically strong. This is privilege. It allows the individual—and, by implication, the rest of the group—to escape from the principle which dominates them.

Most societies are more complicated, of course, than the aristocracy of a school playground. The social structure of present-day England, for instance, is based on a mixture of two principles—money and social class. English life is baffling to visitors, and not infrequently to the English themselves, because of the unstable nature of this mixture. Nine times out of ten, money will do the trick, whatever may be the trick required at the moment; but the tenth time it will go down before some kind of social consideration. Hence the English educational system, which has for two centuries been the counter over which class-tickets were sold to the children of the self-made.

My defence of privilege is a very simple one. It is merely that we should end this state of affairs, this mixed money-and-privilege society, and go over to privilege entirely. I believe this is the way we are floating, in any case, on the stream of history. Every modern nation is finding the

money-system too cumbrous and wasteful. As the race for world resources gathers pace, as the old easy days of Western and European supremacy recede further and further, it is becoming obvious that no nation can survive *unless it controls its own development*: unless, that is, the people who direct it can say exactly who shall rise to the top and who shall sink to the bottom. Already we have fully developed examples of privilege-societies in the Communist countries. But we don't even need to go as far as that: the nearest farmyard will do as an example, for the cow with the best milk-yield is always given the best fodder and the most alert watchdog the best kennel.

These examples may frighten some people, who do not see why their lives should be run on Communist or farmyard lines (which amount to much the same thing). Let me at once reassure these readers. The whole point of my plan is to keep the quality of English life just as it is, only more so. We live in the England of MacWonder and I'm-all-right-Jack. The people have so willed it, and I am not here to contradict them. All I want is to give our elected rulers the simplest means of gaining, and keeping, full control over the development of our society.

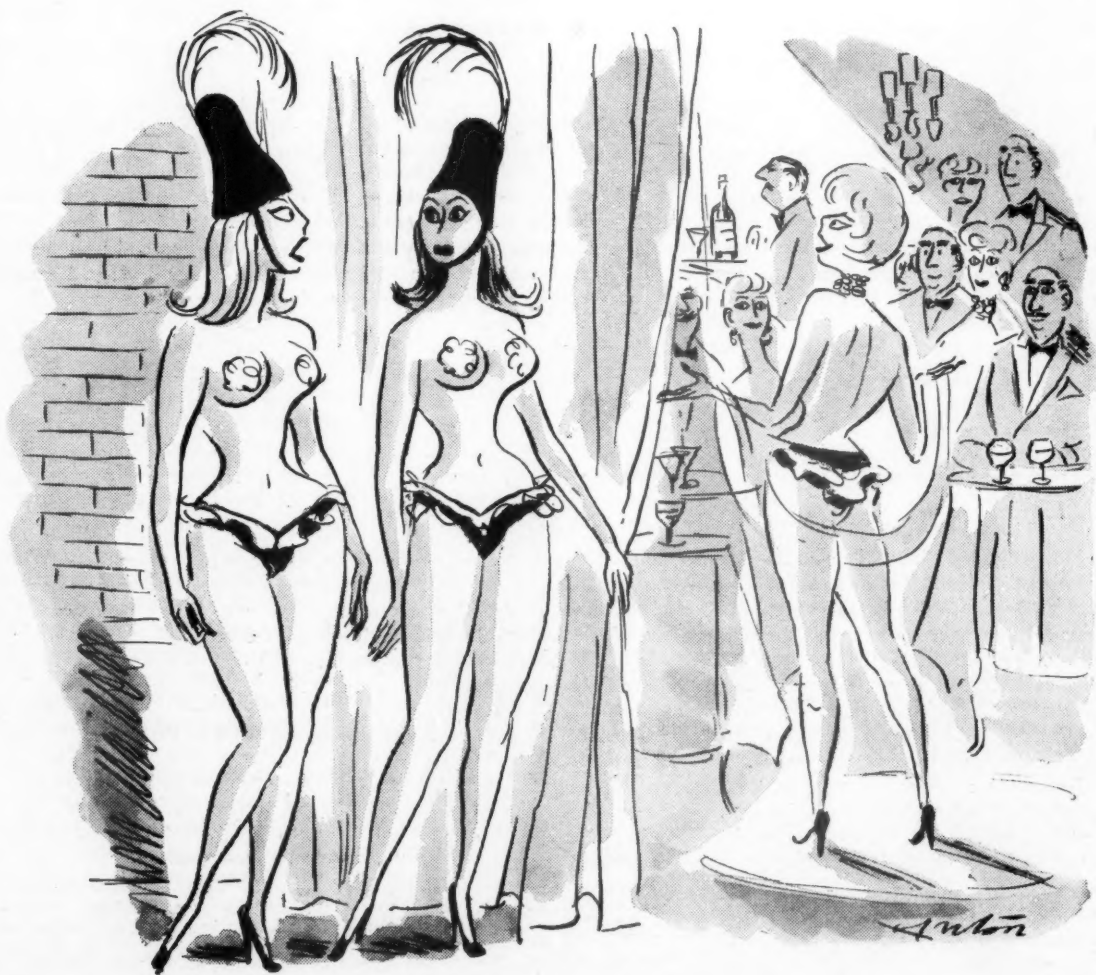
For consider. The money-system is usually held (by the moneyed) to have worked pretty well. As they point out, the door leading to success is marked "Push," and the people with the bank balances are the ones who have pushed. (The justification invoked at this point depends on a misreading of Darwin and Herbert Spencer.) But this is only true up to a point. Money sometimes gets into the wrong hands. Cheerful, irresponsible people are rewarded for possessing some knack, such as being able to hit a golf-ball accurately or play gramophone records on the wireless in a winning manner. And gentle, imaginative people, who would rather die than push anybody or anything, sometimes fluke into the possession of money. Actors earn money; so, in some cases, do the people who write what they act. It is all wrong.

There is too much grit in the money-machine. When money is the key to power some of the power will get into the wrong hands.

I propose, therefore, a privilege-rating for every man and woman not certified insane or confined in prison. This rating would then be used by the citizen on applying for goods or services. It would be assessed on the basis of the subject's ability to fit smoothly into the England of the mid-twentieth century.

The exact method of assessment would take too much space to describe, but briefly the aim would be to eliminate social unrest by helping our society to develop faster and more easily along the lines on which it is moving at present. That is, we need more conformity, more demand for material satisfactions and less for those of the intelligence, more of the consumer in our make-up and less of the producer or instigator. All we have to do is to devise a rating-system that confirms our present values.

There would, of course, be two ratings, according to whether the subject is a Worker or a Leader. The Worker's rating is naturally the simpler, and it entitles him to all goods and services of Class 2. A Worker who obtained maximum rating would be entitled to a semi-detached house or a bungalow, standing in up to half an acre of ground, with fourteen days' paid holiday and a choice of any mass-produced economy motor-car. Maximum ratings, of course, would be rare, perhaps even non-existent; but that would be the ideal. As for the qualifications demanded by the Worker's rating assessment, these would be much the same as those already in force in the Soviet Union (for we must not be too proud to learn from our rivals): industry, high output, lack of interest in anything outside his work—these are the virtues of a Worker. Marks can also be given for Matiness, Kindness to Relatives, and Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities—provided these last do not interfere with full concentration on productive work. Credulity, which can easily be tested



"It all started when I was a child—I simply loved dressing up."



by exposure to advertisements, will always be a good point-scorer in a Worker's assessment, just as Marked Individuality and Scepticism will be heavily penalized.

All Workers will report for assessment on reaching the age of eighteen, Leaders on reaching twenty-one. The procedure for assessment will be the same for both; a one-week period of supervision from an inspector, detailed inquiries among neighbours and relatives, and submission of all personal belongings, including documents, for examination. At the end of the week a simple Psychiatric Quiz, and the assessment is fixed, with no right of appeal. It is repeated at seven-year intervals, so that the maladjusted and unsuitable have seven years in which they can either die or get better.

The Leader's rating assessment, which entitles him to the

energies will be channelled into the rearing of children; after forty they too will undergo seven-yearly assessments, and particular attention will be paid to their scores, since middle-aged women of the Leader class dispose of a disproportionate amount of money, time and energy. Harmlessness will be the quality most looked for here; a Leaderwife who has some time-consuming hobby, such as rock-gardening or the breeding of terriers, will be marked highly irrespective of her other qualities.

I hope these few notes have shown how useful and trouble-free a full system of privilege-rating would be. And I have only to add one reassurance that will still the qualms in any English breast: *the two classes will not be interchangeable*. Leaders, who will be registered at birth, will remain Leaders



goods and services of Class 1, is naturally a more complicated affair than the Worker's. Perhaps the chief difference is that the Worker's rating requirements are made known, whereas those for a Leader are never openly formulated; one of the qualities needed in a Leader is to adapt instinctively to the social requirements as he senses them. But obviously they will include such points as Leader-like Behaviour, i.e. our old friend O.L.Q., and Controlled Eccentricity. This means that the Leader will show one or two idiosyncrasies to mark him off from other Leaders; inwardly, of course, the whole Leader class will be as indistinguishable as the Workers. A Leader will be marked up for one eccentricity, and still more for two; if he has three, however, he will lose his Eccentricity Bonus altogether and be penalized heavily. Thus a Leader will score if he is (a) an enthusiast for obsolete railways and (b) an amateur weight-lifter; but if he is an enthusiast for obsolete railways, an amateur weight-lifter and a vegetarian he will be penalized. Leaderwives will not be assessed until the age of forty, on the assumption that up to that age their

even if they consistently obtain no marks at all; and Workers will remain Workers except at times of acute national emergency, when the top ten per cent will be skimmed off and allowed temporary rank as Leaders.

So, you see, everything will be just the same as it always has been.

Next week: STEPHEN POTTER

Over To You—Over

"My notes this week ought to be a talealmost unparalleled rain. Oats and wheat recorded my present misery. It has of woe; they would be if they accurately almost unparalleled rain. Oats and wheat been a week of disaster occasioned by the bearing trees have toppled over. The weight of the crop plus the rain-soaked foliage was too much for the poor foothold of the are laid; in the orchard the heaviest-roots which had little better than mud to cling to."—*Southern Weekly News*.

Demarcations of Discourtesy

By LESLIE MARSH

"GROSSLY exaggerated, that's what all these rumours are about demarcation disputes between the American trade unions giving the organized razz to Khrushchev."

My informant, though an English shop steward, has his ear so close to the ground on international labour affairs that he often uses ointment on a sore place where the pavement chafes the lobe.

"Not but what there hasn't been a bit of a barney here and there, I don't doubt. When they start dropping coffins in the water, well, it stands to reason that's the Woodworkers' pigeon up to a point, but when you get down to brass tacks there's the handles, and what are they made of? There's scope for amicable compromise with the Metalworkers there, I'll grant you.

"And this gallows they rigged up for Mr. K. might have called for a certain amount of fraternal give and take. Over there it's mainly all-electric, though they still hang in a few States, so that brings the Rope-yarners in, and I won't say there isn't an old back-number craft guild of headsmen somewhere still sending a delegate to conference. I did hear a tale that when they were arguing about whether to have a gibbet or what an electrician cut up rough with an old-timer flashing his axe and said 'I'll knock your block off.' I'll lay you any money that wasn't a nasty-tempered threat to land him a fourpenny one but a straight tip that he would half-inch the old fuddy-duddy's toolkit if there was any attempt to make the set-up look all Tower of London and proper reactionary hard manual graft.

"But this poetry lark, I own, could have led to a few hasty words. I'd be surprised if that bit about *Roses are red and violets blue; Stalin dropped dead, what about you?* got through without a card vote. An awkward bunch when it comes to solidarity, these poets. They aren't properly affiliated but there is some sort of daffy over here—I fancy it was Dylan Thomas got it going on

one of his sprees, and he had them all lined out in their verse-form units, Ballade-Spinners, Pindaric Processers, and so forth. You ought to have seen the carry-on when some long-haired young improver—and not fully paid up at that—tried to sneak an alexandrine into a journeyman's hexameters. Great big husky fellow he was, branch treasurer too, and he bristled up all over. 'You just try that again, you young number-lisper,' he bellowed. 'You just try, that's all, you and your bleeding alexandrine that like a wounded snake drags its slow length along.'

"That wasn't any worse than a whippersnapper at a delegate meeting who'd never read the rules of debate, let alone Wordsworth, moving a substantive amendment before the pending amendment had been disposed of, clean out of order, that the sonnet be not scorned by the critics of Khrushchev. 'Ever tried getting fourteen lines on a banner, mate?' the chairman asked as

he told him to sit down and shut up. A pernicky lot, and on the grab. Not all these insulting poems can be written in the bosses' time, not when big chunks of the stuff are wanted for pamphlets and suchlike, and when the work's put out at home it has to be paid for out of union funds. We don't want scabbing, even for the Cause. I've heard some of them claiming time and a half for bashing out villanelles and sestinas—both tricky capers and want a lot of handling—in their own time. The old heroics, mind, are a piece of cake. I couldn't conscientiously recommend a penny over the rate for that job, Sundays, Bank Holidays and all.

"Anyway I'm very glad this Khrushchev affair happened over there and not here. What with Cousins and Carron flying off the handle at each other you'd be lucky to get our union chaps all insulting the same man for ten minutes together."



"Of course he's guilty. All men are guilty."

Some Enigmas of History

23.—The Secret Behind the Duke's Strange Passion

By N. F. SIMPSON

ONE rumour I want to scotch before it starts is that it was my grandfather who bought the Duke of Caterham's gasometer. He would have had no possible use for it. Certainly not in *this* life.

Another rumour, which may or may not be true, is that the thing is stuffed with documents of one kind and another. It seems unlikely on the face of it, but I put it forward for what it may be worth. A former Duke of Caterham was said to have secreted a

number of papers—letters, diaries, *billets-doux*—in one of the gasometers on his father's estate against the possibility of a sudden rise in value at some later date, when for some reason documents might perhaps come unexpectedly into vogue, however fleetingly. Since he could hardly have envisaged any personal advantage from a contingency which would have been bound to arise some centuries after his death, if at all, he would seem to have been making provision for posterity.

But although this would have been a characteristic enough gesture on the part of a man with *noblesse oblige*, as it were, in his blood, there are nevertheless very good grounds for thinking that the whole story of the documents was a complete fabrication, added later in an attempt to give verisimilitude to the original story.

What *was* the original story? This was my first line of inquiry. On September 3, 1958, I detailed a special agent, whose real name was Sid but



"Of course, beauty treatments aren't what they were before the war."

whom for obvious security reasons I shall here call Bert, to initiate an investigation.

His report when it came was in unbreakable cipher, so I have no record of what actually took place, but one can easily picture the scene.

"Where did you get this from?"

"Been in the family for centuries."

"Gasometer, isn't it?"

"Ancestor brought it back with him. Crusades, I believe. 1193 or thereabouts."

"The thing hadn't been invented then."

"It hasn't been invented now, either, if it comes to that."

"Oh?"

"Unless it's a good bit later than I think it is. What year is it, as a matter of interest?"

"1960."

"Good God no! It's never that time already?"

"Getting on for 1961, as a matter of fact."

"I thought it was about 1663."

"Time flies, doesn't it?"

"It certainly does."

"What do you propose doing with this—this—gasometer? So-called?"

"Nothing. Nothing at all. I'm quite content to sit and watch it go up and down."

"Not thinking of taking it out of the country, or anything of that kind?"

"Good heavens no. Why should I do that?"

"That's what I'm here to find out, Mr. Caterham."

"If I'd wanted to take it out of the country I'd hardly have gone to the trouble of building a gasworks round it."

"People do funny things, believe me."

"It would be the height of folly, I should have thought, to build a gasworks round a gasometer one intended at any moment to uproot and go off round the world with."

"It could be a blind, Mr. Caterham, couldn't it?"

"A blind?"

"To put us off the scent."

"A gasometer is a pretty bulky commodity, Inspector. Even *you* must realize that."

"I'm not an inspector, Mr. Caterham. I'm a private investigator. And as a private investigator I know that human nature being what it is there is no



"My Government wonders whether you'd mind putting our rather expensive instrument in the recoverable part."

reason to suppose that sheer bulk alone is likely to remain an insuperable obstacle for very long if a man is determined enough."

"What would I do? Carry it on my back?"

"Not necessarily, Mr. Caterham."

And so it would go on, endlessly following the familiar pattern. Ruthlessness matched by cunning; cunning at grips with ruthlessness.

Only one point of value however was to emerge from this imaginary interview and I followed it up immediately. This was that brief reference to the year 1663. I had to hunt through a whole catalogue of relevant works before I finally tracked down what I was looking for on page 594 of a book written by me a few years ago entitled *If So, Then Yes*.

In 1663, it appears, the fifteenth Duke of Caterham regained possession of the family gasometer which had disappeared at some time during the Civil War, and had it installed in the grounds on the south side of the house, where it was still standing at the time of Majuba Hill in 1881. The question which is, however, left unsolved is his reason for recovering what can at best have been an expensive luxury at a time when, coal-gas being unheard of as a form of fuel, the only use to which it could be put was as a receptacle for documents which might or might not appreciate in value at some later date.

Several theories for his action have been put forward. Most of them are far-fetched; some hardly bear examination. One theory has it that the Duke wanted the gasometer as a present

THEN AS NOW



PORTRAIT OF THE GENTLEMAN WHO DRAWS UP THE METEOROLOGICAL REPORTS.

"ANOTHER DEPRESSION IS COMING!"

[Just as he was about to take his holiday, too!]

[September 8, 1888]

for his mistress, but as a matter of easily ascertainable historical fact the fifteenth Duke of Caterham *had no mistress!*

Another story is that the whole thing was an invention of the Duke's, who wanted for private reasons of his own, connected no doubt with Mrs. Kirkpatrick, to gain a reputation for being ahead of his time. (Gasometers were unknown in 1663 and did not come into general use for some two hundred years.) The fact that he was careful to leave no evidence from which such a conclusion could be drawn ties in very well with what we know from other sources of the Duke's excessive cautiousness, which in his own time was legendary.

But if the gasometer was nothing more than a figment of the Duke of Caterham's imagination, we still have to explain how it was that a man, not so far as we know gifted with second

sight, could have conjured up in his mind a structure which was not to come into existence for nearly two centuries.

A more fruitful line of inquiry seems to me to be opened up by a piece of information I stumbled on at about the same time concerning the seventeenth Duke. He was by all accounts a remarkable man whose passion for dromedaries carried him halfway round the world in search of the ibex. He seems to have searched for it in almost every quarter of the globe except in the mountains of southern Europe, which are its natural habitat. Not only therefore did he fail to find the ibex but he had no time for more than a passing glance at the dromedary either.

What was there about this particular kind of wild mountain goat to send a man dedicated to the dromedary all over the world in search of it? The answer is that the Duke was a realist who knew that at any moment he could

be approached, perhaps by a total stranger, and asked to explain what in his view was the essential difference between a dromedary and an ibex. Such a situation, if it were ever to arise, could have only one outcome. For the Duke *had never seen an ibex*. Asked therefore to compare one with a dromedary, about which he knew more than any other man then living, he would have found himself totally at a loss—and this was an eventuality that he was prepared to spend his whole life in attempting to forestall.

So much for the facts. The rest is conjecture pure and simple. This endless pursuit of the ibex in the name of the dromedary was bound sooner or later to end in failure and bitter disappointment, and this being so—this at least is how I see it—it was probably he and not the fifteenth Duke who at a moment when his powers of resistance were at an unusually low ebb allowed himself to become the recipient of a gasometer—a gasometer which was not only an eyesore but an anachronism into the bargain.

This of course is no more than guess-work, but one thing which is certain is that he could not have been in the full possession of his faculties at the time. It is not difficult to see, aided by a little sympathetic imagination, how to the weary and disillusioned old man, balked of the dromedary he had so much set his heart on, this great white elephant of a gasometer seemed the next best thing.

Such at all events is the theory I am putting forward. It fits in with most of the known facts, and has moreover one outstanding advantage over the only theory which would fit *all* the facts—but which would, if we adopted it, leave us without a gasometer at all! This I for one cannot accept, since it is upon the existence of the gasometer that the rumour I am out at all costs to scotch before it starts is based—namely that it was my grandfather who bought it. And if there is one fact that is certain amongst so much that is pure speculation, it is that my grandfather did no such thing.

☆

"The 9.30 a.m. Glengariff-Killarney Bus will leave at 10 a.m. each day."

Killarney race-card

If you're too early you'll miss it.

Global Way of Life

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

LAST week one of the *Evening Standard's* American correspondents—the one who couldn't get anything on how Khrushchev ties his boot laces or who makes Castro's caps—sent in a disturbing report which may have escaped your attention in all the excitement. It told of an educational programme for U.S. executives planning to work abroad which teaches them in high-pressure four-week courses how to "create a fresh and more favourable image of Americans." Though this movement is now in the hands of the business Council for International Understanding it was apparently launched by Eisenhower, who became worried when Nixon was pelted with Venezuelan fruit in 1958, and set up a top-level conference in quest of world love. He argued, I suppose, that if a Vice-President, skilled in the approach to public sympathy, drew pineapples on sight, the frankly cigar-chewing American, guilelessly demanding southern fried chicken and quoting skyscraper heights, was in for love starvation on the grand scale.

The course is now in its sixth session, and it's said that go-ahead U.S. firms with overseas interests are breaking each other's arms to get their men into the last few vacancies for autumn, '62. In short the institution has arrived, and we may soon see an end to Americans cutting their food up small and eating it with a fork, wearing their collar-ends buttoned down, and pronouncing the "ham" in Birmingham, and a beginning to the Universal Man.

Only a truly dynamic syllabus could manage this in four weeks, and I'm not at all sure whether it's possible, even at that. It isn't as if the system confines itself to Anglicization. Trade is universal, and the need is obviously for a global de-Americanization of Americans. Four weeks of genuine application might turn a New Yorker into a passable Londoner, ironing out those offending idiosyncrasies of gait and costume that cause heads to turn curiously in St. James's Street; but what if the graduate's next assignment is in Belgrade, and he

doesn't even know how to make the angle of his hat look Yugoslavian?

Mr. Khrushchev, it has been pointed out—though I would have liked to keep him out of this if possible—turns his hat up at the front in countries where hats are worn turned up at the front, and down where they are worn down. I don't know whether this is a touch of individual genius or the result of a policy ruling by the Supreme Præsidium, but it certainly affords a degree of foreign acceptance out of all proportion

to the trouble involved in having an aide give your brim a flick before you start down the gang-plank. I recommend the Business C. for I.U. to give more than a passing thought to their pupils' hats. A man could lose a big deal in Havana by crashing a sales director's office in a Castro cap—I didn't want *him* to get in again, either—flipped upwards, baseball-fashion.

Take Africa, if someone hasn't by the time this sees print. What are these courses doing about tuition in tribal



"May I see your invitation, sir?"



"Is there anything you wish to say before I pass sentence upon you?"

dancing? Before we dismiss the idea as absurd, let us admit that the foreigner whom we least hate having around is the one who conforms in social behaviour. It's not a bit of good one of America's commercial ambassadors going to a Lumumba ball and offering to do the calling for a square-dance. He must know how to stamp his way through something a little more local, shouting Vum, Vum, Vum! One or two of those and he can get out his order book.

Fortunately for American trade, the coloured races have long taken to Western dress—which, as they were on to the need for favourable images long before Eisenhower, makes yet another nonsense of the "backward races" smear; so a conscientious representative of U.S. Domestic Electronics has no need to storm the jungle territories wearing a mud hair-do and alligator tooth anklets. Nor, I feel, would Togoland tycoons be impressed if the sales

drive kit included a bottle of black dye, sufficient for the face and hands and guaranteed durable through one three-hour interview at average local temperature. It can be dangerous to meet a customer more than half-way. To eradicate your own national characteristics may be all right; to assume the clients' looks grasping.

Besides, this Business Council must remember the risk of losing their rep. altogether. He could steep himself in local colour until it stained. He's studied so hard to act like a Turk or a Thailander that he's finally stuck with it, and even America isn't so rich in overseas salesmen that she can risk their taking out nationalization papers, abandoning the company's interest and disclosing its formula for getting the secret ingredient into the after-shave lotion. And worse trouble could follow. The American who goes native for a few

years with the Zambesi Metal Corporation is ideally equipped to return to Pittsburgh and sell them silly—a Bechuanalander with such a hugely impressive mastery of the American Way of Life that he presents the most favourable image of Bechuanaland ever seen striding into the Carnegie Steel-works front office.

I mention these perils from a desire to be helpful. The rational part of me recognizes that the Business Council is on to something. We have a stake in the stability of the American economy. Sinews of peace. Common tongue. And so on. But emotionally I must confess to feeling saddened. The first American who comes into my office with a narrow-brimmed Jermyn Street bowler, saying "My dear fellow" and swinging a rimless eyeglass, may have quite a job to break me down, the lousy bum.

My

HE was interrupted with intentional rudeness in the middle of his story. "I wish you wouldn't say that," the man from the North said.

"Say what?" said the man from Reigate.

"When I was at my prep school."

"What's the matter with it?"

"Everything," said the North. "It's unnecessary, superfluous, snobbish embroidery. Do you have to remind me—or yourself—what kind of school you attended?"

"What on earth d'you want me to say then?" said Reigate.

"Well, if you must be explicit why not say 'When I was at my fee-paying,

non-state-aided preparatory school'?"

"Such heavy sarcasm," said Reigate.

"Or," the North continued, "you might shoot an even better line with 'When I was at my fee-paying prep school before proceeding to my non-grant public school.'"

"Oh, dear," said Reigate, "you are upset. My dear chap, everybody says 'My prep school'—it's a convention, nothing more."

"And 'My public school'?"

"Naturally. What would you say?"

"I should say 'When I was at school.'"

"And where was that?"

"Ironstoneleigh Junior Elementary, Mixed. But you'd consider it caddish





in the extreme if I introduced every reminiscence with 'When I was at my elementary school,' wouldn't you?"

"Not necessarily," said Reigate.

"And then went on to talk of my grant-aided municipal secondary school, grammar!"

"I should think you had an inferiority complex."

"You'd be wrong," said the North. "I feel extremely sorry for people who go through life clinging to the nominal status conferred by their private prep and public schools."

"I suppose," said Reigate, "you also object to 'My club'?"

"In principle, yes. It's the fact that you're taking it for granted that everyone has a club."



"And 'My car'?"

"Yes, but for a different reason. 'My car' suggests that it's one of several, that there are others, your wife's, your son's, your man's..."

"Sure you're not joking?" said Reigate.

"I'm deadly serious," said the North.

"Extraordinary!" said Reigate, shaking his head.

"Isn't it?" said the North.

"How about 'My wife'? Don't tell me you prefer 'The wife.'"

"No, 'My wife' is okay. No objec-



Planets

THE nearer planets are as dead as nails.

On Mars, for instance, very little grows;
In Mercury's attenuated gales

Pobbles would burn their non-existent toes;
The seas of Venus are too hot for whales,
The skies too cloudy to encourage crows.

The planets even farther from the sun
Are colder than the seats of metal chairs.

On Jupiter a mouse would weigh a ton,
Which holds out little hope for Polar bears.
There is no food, no future and no fun
Inside those ghastly rings that Saturn wears.

They say a gram weighs more or less a gram
Upon Uranus; otherwise, it's hell.

Neptune, quite briefly, is not worth a damn;
Pluto much less, as far as I can tell.

Earth's far from perfect, but it's where I am
And where I'll stay. It suits me pretty well.

— R. P. LISTER

tion. You're only allowed one at a time, just like everybody else, and you're not stating how expensive and exclusive she is. 'My mistress' would of course be another matter."

"Well," said Reigate, "what about 'My doctor,' 'My banker'?"

"All acceptable. The possessive only becomes objectionable if it drifts into the plural. I don't like 'My doctors.'"

"I could do with another drink," said Reigate. "What'll it be?"

"My round," said the North.

"No objection," said Reigate.

— A. B. H.

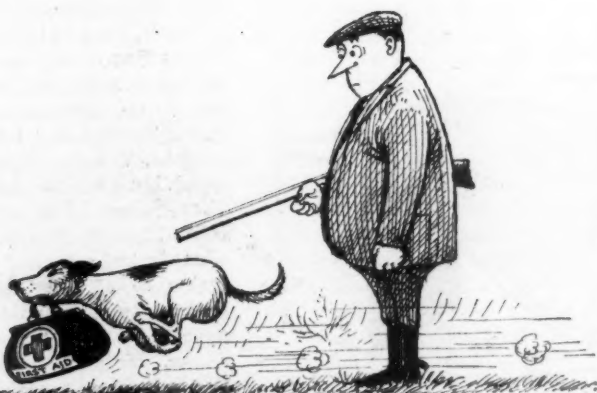


HARGREAVES.

MIXED BAG

October 1—Pheasant shooting begins





The Day of the Migwitch Crackens

By ALEX ATKINSON

NOBODY ever knew for sure why they came to be called Crackens. Some said it was a word that had been buried in man's collective unconscious for untold centuries, a legacy from the days when unknowable horror lurked in caves or the deep primeval shrubberies. Some said it was a spontaneous invention of little Jimmie Cowslip's on that fateful February evening in 1960. A few older people pointed out that it was a local word for the stuffing in sofas and was therefore neither mysterious nor completely irrelevant. Perhaps it doesn't matter. Perhaps it does . . .

One thing is certain: the Crackens awoke that night in Migwitch, and some authorities (Arnold Ffeipher, one-time Reader in Parapatetical Metabogology at Reading University is one) believe that Migwitch will never be quite the same again. There are those who would be inclined to agree . . .

* * * *

I remember that Milly had a slight cold that evening, and as we drove

through a drizzle of rain in the direction of Dorset the car windows were tight shut. It may have been for this reason that as we reached the outskirts of Migwitch neither of us heard anything untoward. Moreover the car engine was inclined to be noisy, which didn't help. As it turned out, there was actually nothing untoward to hear, but we didn't know that at the time and we were uneasy.

"I feel . . . somehow . . . uneasy," said Milly, reaching for a fresh tissue in the glove compartment.

"I know," I said.

The windscreen wipers swept to and fro, to and fro, as windscreen wipers will. Ahead lay the road, curving through the village. How very ordinary it all seemed! In the glare of the headlights I could see a horse-trough . . . a group of stately elms at the edge of Migwitch Green . . . the inn-sign of the "Ring o' Bells" . . . the local bobby on his solemn rounds . . . a few children playing tag beside the smithy . . . a belated Morris dancer making his way

home to roast saddle of mutton in the warm haven of his thatched cottage . . . a whiskered ploughman dallying with a couple of milkmaids in the doorway of the radio and television shop. On the surface, a placid English scene, without a hint of terror. And yet . . .

"Let me see," said Milly, as we splashed past the vicarage, "isn't Migwitch the place where the government have some top secret work going on in a requisitioned mansion, with boffins locked in labs and Alsatians prowling the grounds all night?"

I nodded briefly. It is the only way I can nod.

"I wonder what they're up to," said Milly. Milly is a typical modern girl, bless her, fond of Toulouse-Lautrec and canasta, and always keen to probe into the truth of things. You can't hide much from Milly.

"Sir Charles Flake, with whom I sometimes lunch," I said, "tells me that they are probably concerned with radioactive things of one sort or another."

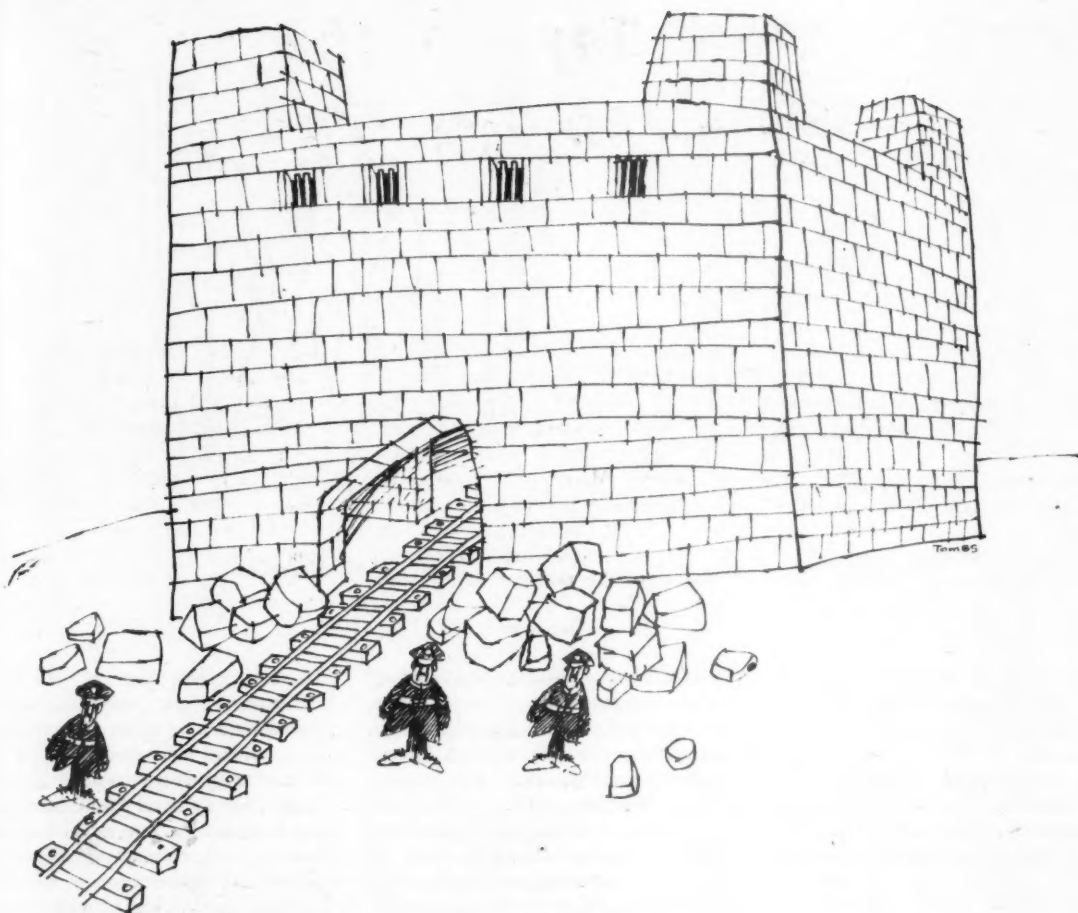
"I see," said Milly thoughtfully.

I thought little of her remark at the time, but I was to remember it later.

Meanwhile, as we approached a group of farm buildings which stood grey and silent in the rain, Milly suddenly clutched my arm.

"Here, I say, old girl," I murmured, for my first thought was that on some sudden impulse she had decided to snuggle up close and put her cheek to mine. She was always a warm-blooded creature, and we were certainly engaged, but I was alarmed just the same. For one thing, I didn't want to catch her cold. Then, in the nick of time, I saw what she had seen, and jammed on the brakes so abruptly that the engine stalled. Apart from the steady drumming of rain on the roof there was silence. Milly put her hands over her face and seemed to shrink beside me.





Approaching us down the middle of the road, at a sort of shambling jog-trot, was an armchair with a faded loose-cover of chintz.

At such a time it is often some trivial, homely detail that impresses itself most forcibly on the mind, and just before I blacked out I noticed that one of its castors was missing.

* * * * *

For much of what follows I have had to rely on eye-witness accounts collected months later from Migwitch inhabitants, furtive hand-outs from War Office spokesmen, notes taken by a reporter at a secret session of the National Society for the Prevention of Psychological Research, and conversations with Edward Longrow, who was one of those who elected of their own free will, and against the express orders of the Ministry of Works, to live through the whole Migwitch nightmare from little

Jimmie Cowslip's terrifying encounter with his granny's fireside chair to the last, menacing March of the Chesterfields and Sofas.

* * * * *

They didn't believe little Jimmie Cowslip, because at the age of thirteen he was already the second biggest liar in the village. Besides, the idea of a fireside chair lurching across the room and fetching anyone a clout on the shin with its rocker seemed unlikely by any standards. At the police-station Jimmie explained how he had run screaming from the house (his granny was up in the village buying snuff when the incident occurred) and how, looking back over his shoulder, he had seen the chair standing in the front garden, *watching him*.

"How could it?" asked the constable.

"It bain't got no eyes, do 'ee?"

"Eyes or no," said Jimmie, "watching

me it were, I'll stake my oath on 'un. I tell 'ee I don't like 'er. 'Er's a rum go and no mistake, dang 'un."

He then signed a statement, and the constable put the whole affair out of his mind until the evening of the following Wednesday, when Mrs. Fortescue, the doctor's wife, telephoned to say that her four dining-chairs had just marched out in single file through the french windows and were romping in a meadow. "I can see them clearly from the bathroom window," she said. "Quite frankly, constable, I'm a little disturbed, and so is my husband."

* * * * *

"Those early days were nerve-racking," said Edward Longrow. "One could never be sure from one minute to the next whether one's own chairs were in the plot or not. If it *was* a plot—we didn't even know that. The incidents were isolated at first: an armchair



"Wonderful . . .



Marvellous . . .

prowling here, a sofa trotting there. There was no actual violence at the beginning, but more than one victim reported an expression of malevolence on this or that piece of furniture as it became mobile. 'It seemed to be somehow *threatening*,' they used to say, 'and cocky with it.' It was round about this time that people began to refer to affected pieces of furniture as Crackens . . .

"Gradually, of course, the situation became unbearable. By the middle of the third week there was hardly a house in Migwitch that hadn't a distressing incident to report. Chairs were unaccountably missing; Mrs. Elphinstone's chaise-longue broke a leg coming downstairs and the distraught woman wanted to have it shot; a studio couch was seen holding what appeared to be a meeting on the village green, surrounded by a large number of occasional chairs and some piano-stools; Dr. Fortescue reported unusual tramping sounds from his waiting-room in the dead of night; my own sofa turned nasty one evening while I was entertaining Phoebe Wheycurd, and tipped us both on to the floor: the whole village was on the verge of hysteria. On the third Saturday a detachment of the R.A.S.C. moved in, and a voluntary evacuation scheme was announced for all inhabitants who could be spared.

By the Monday Migwitch was to all intents and purposes a deserted village, and a feeling of dread hung in the air. I stayed on despite my uneasiness, because I had a theory."

On a crisp morning in the middle of March the Superintendent held an inquiry in the main conference room at Migwitch Priory. The entire staff was present, the research labs having been left in the charge of junior lay attendants.

The expectant buzz of talk in the conference room subsided as the Superintendent put on his spectacles and consulted a notebook.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said. "I need hardly remind you that there is something funny going on in Migwitch. The few inhabitants remaining have had to nail their chairs to the floor. Couches are lurking in gangs in the woods and copses. An R.A.S.C. corporal was yesterday deliberately *sat* on by a kitchen stool: we can only

The Graves of Academe

THE ghosts were all right till this grave-digger came
With the rheumatic style and the missionary's frown.
Unpleasing, unpleasured, he lectures each shade:
Now they ought to be dead, but they will not lie down.

How the tall, genial spirits must laugh
When this pocket Disposer-Supreme volunteers
To drill and dismiss them, puts each in his place
And lays on the tombstone a wreath of pale sneers.

Which do we honour—a generous host,
Or maggots puffed up by the fare he provides them?
Ghosts whose bright presence has outlived the dawn,
Or this channering worm that officiously chides them?

— C. DAY LEWIS



"How about dinner to-night?"

thank God it was nothing heavier. Obviously, these . . . things . . . Crackens . . . call them what you will . . . have become *animate*."

There was an excited stir among the white-coated scientists.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said the Superintendent, "I want you to cast your minds back a matter of eighteen months, to a rumour here in the Research Establishment that a small bottle of assorted genes had been mislaid by one of you in the village. It was hinted at the time that apart from a few billion genes of one kind and another, the bottle also contained some radioactive molecules, together with a number of isolated positive nuclei in series, the whole preserved in alcohol and labelled, for some reason I have never been able to determine, *Poison*. Now I want the person who was responsible for this regrettable slip, if he or she will be so kind, to raise his or her right hand. . ."

Tension mounted in Migwitch. Chairs were now openly gathering in the lanes and byroads. As one passed they would rustle and squeak together, and then fall silent. They would seem to *watch* people. They seemed, too, to have some system of actual communication. Albert Fernside, the postman, told of one old armchair, standing on a

corner with its antimacassar awry and a sulky look on its upholstery, which summoned four settles and a dangerous-looking divan apparently from nowhere, and set upon him. Edward Longrow saw Fernside in hospital. He was not a pretty sight.

"I'm all right *in myself*," he said. "But I keep a-hearin' of them a-patterin' after me along the High Street. Why did they a-pick on *I*, zur? I warn't a-doin' of them no 'arm. I tell 'ee straight, I wouldn't 'urt a *footstool*!"

It was shortly after this that the crew of a helicopter on loan from the Fleet Air Arm reported an immense concentration of Crackens on the north-west boundary of the village, drawn up in ranks, with chesterfields and sofas in the van and rush-bottomed chairs in rear. "Indications are," said the report, "that this whole force, comprising divans, easies, tabourets, benches, rocking-chairs, ottomans, sofas, deck-chairs, settees, *fauteuils* and couches, is preparing to advance on a wide front beyond the frontier of the village and march in warlike order in the general direction of the capital. I say again, the capital. Over to you—over . . ."

Some said it was a great waste of furniture, and there were even murmurs about compensation from some of the more mercenary Migwitchians. All I

know is, it made a splendid bonfire. From where we stood, on rising ground a quarter of a mile beyond the village, we could see the flames leaping into the night sky, and hear the merry crackle as the sparks flew upwards. Now and then we heard a distinct musical note as a spring, set free by the smouldering of its confining webbing, shot high into the air above the conflagration.

"Well, I don't think we should have any further trouble there," said the Colonel in charge smugly, as he peered down at the fire through his field glasses. "Damn good job it didn't affect the sideboards and the tables and the wardrobes too, what?"

Milly clutched my arm.

"I *still* don't understand," she said. "If they *didn't* come from outer space, how—"

"My dear old thing," I said softly, "you mustn't blame *everything* on outer space, you know."

"You beast, you know I don't do that!"

"There's such a thing as mutation too, isn't there?" I added enigmatically. "Chairs are mostly made of atoms, aren't they?"

"Well, yes, atoms and glue, I suppose. But—"

"Well, then!" I said.

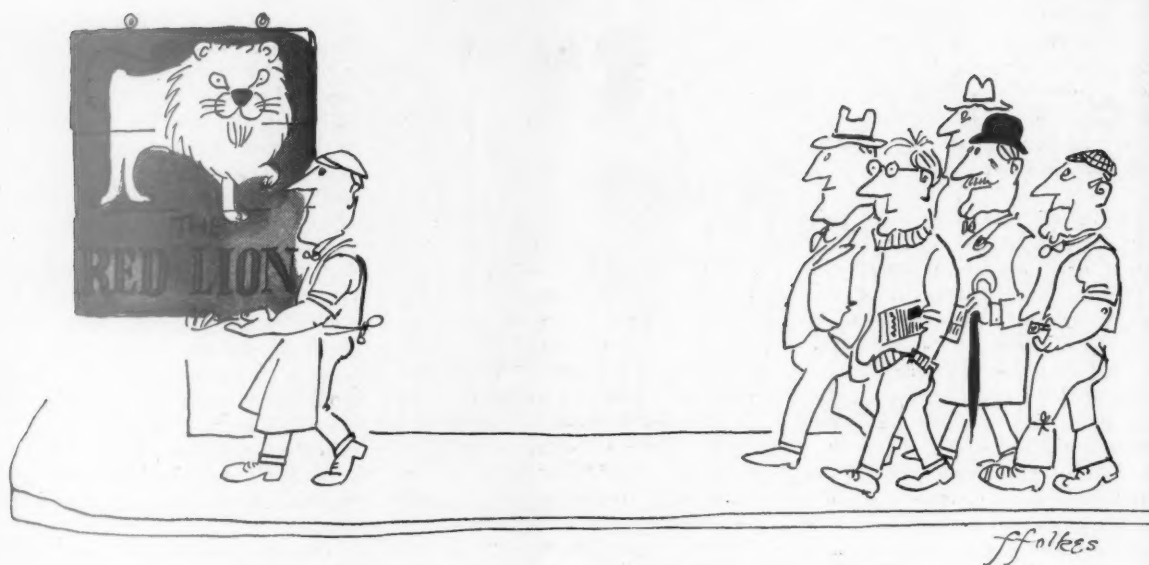
And, suddenly, she shivered.

☆

"RUGBY LEAGUE BAN STAYS"
The Times

Well, it's a man's game.





Our Man in America

P. G. WODEHOUSE gets the exclusives

BAD news for babies comes from a usually reliable source. Even as these words are written the Messrs. Nelson Rockefeller and Henry Cabot Lodge will have started out on an expedition through all the well-known vacation centres of New York state, their object being to kiss every child of tender years they come across, whether they seek to hide in the Catskills, on Jones Beach, in the Rockaways or at Coney Island. Their motive? To tickle parents pink and induce them to vote for the Republican nominee in November.

Any place that looks to them like good kissing territory will be grist to their mills, and as they are coming by helicopter, accompanied by hordes of pressmen, also in helicopters, the whole thing, as one commentator puts it, will look like an invasion from Mars. It is not yet known whether the two will operate in street clothes or in bathing suits, but whatever the costume they select they are going to scare the younger set stiff. I am usually considered a pretty intrepid man and have been from birth, but I know that if in my formative years Gladstone or Lord

Salisbury had swooped down from a helicopter and kissed me I would have let out a shout heard round the world.

Quite a bit of worry the authorities at the Lewiston, Maine, county gaol were caused the other day by the activities of Peter Neptune—I swear I don't invent these names. There really are Peter Neptunes in America—whose excellent conduct up to the day to which I refer had led to his being made a trusty at the prison.

If you are a trusty you are allowed a certain freedom of movement, and Peter Neptune took advantage of this to walk out of the gaol. He then stole a car and drove to a near-by town, where he was involved in a collision. He drove away from the scene of the accident and smashed into a warehouse. Backing away from the warehouse, he collided with a trailer lorry, and this seems to have given him the impression that there was something wrong with the car he had stolen, for he abandoned it and stole another one. But it was apparently his driving rather than the car that had been amiss, for he had gone only about a mile in the new vehicle of

his choice when he lost control and plunged into a rocky ditch, from which the police extracted him. They then took him back to Lewiston.

The view generally expressed in the Lewiston county gaol is that he should have kept on walking.

"Not guilty!" spectators pouring out of a Denver courtroom shouted to the waiting crowds in the street and a great cheer went up, for sympathy from the first had been with the prisoner in the dock, a parrot which had been haled before the awful majesty of the Law, charged with using obscene language in a public spot.

Apparently the parrot had been accustomed to sit outside its owner's house watching the passers-by, and one of these, a woman of strict views, had it arrested, claiming that every time she went by the bird had used what she delicately described as "waterfront language."

The jury would have liked to hear a few samples, but the parrot was too smart for that. Throughout the trial, no doubt on advice of counsel, it maintained a dignified silence, with the

result that the rap could not be pinned on it. Later, the story goes, when talking to reporters, it expressed itself with a good deal of frankness, being particularly candid about the ancestry of the deputy district attorney, who had conducted the prosecution.

Talking of reporters, the first lesson news editors teach them, we believe, is to start their story off arrestingly. One of them at least seems to have got the idea all right, as witness the following:

DETROIT (A.P.). A house ran over Richard Siewertsen yesterday.

You couldn't want anything crisper or more to the point than that. What happens over here is that if you don't like the spot where your house is you have it dug up and loaded on a trailer and moved elsewhere. Mr. Siewertsen senior did this, and he told Junior to ride on top and see that it cleared the utility wires. He was doing this when he fell off and the house ran over him. Perfectly simple when one hears the full story. No ill effects, except that Richard hurt his left foot a little. He got on again and the house resumed its journey.

And meanwhile in Casper, Wyoming. They have a volunteer force there which is more or less the pride of the place, and last week a rifle inspection was held in the armoury. The officer was a man who took his duties seriously and he did not skimp his task. He inspected this and examined that, and finally he took a rifle from a private and removed the butt-plate.

A note popped out at him, worded thus:

"Kinda snoopy, aren't you?"

(Almost) No Regrets

I DO not wish I'd sailed alone
In a canoe, to far Cathay;
Or married someone else; or known
At fifteen, all I know to-day;
Or got my "first"; or seen men drink
Champagne poured from my size 3 shoe.
In fact, complacently, I think
That there are really only two
Major regrets: and they are these
(Both now too late to remedy!)
WHY did we sink our all in bees,
Or call our child Euphrosyne?

— MARGOT CROSSE

The Wedding Crab

By PATRICK RYAN

WHEN Mr. Peter Sellers, at the pictures, trod on that plastic terrapin he sent the tiny, buckled wheels of my memory spinning back to a similar shindig I once had with a crustacean in church.

"That's the last time," my mother said afterwards, "that I ever let your father take a crab to a wedding."

And I didn't blame her. Although I was grateful she didn't include my Philip Mead cricket bat in her nuptial strictures. I was ten at the time and worshipped the old Hampshireman.

It was Cousin Edie on my mother's side getting married in a church at the northern, classier end of the Old Kent Road. She was a big raw-boned girl and if they'd run a competition for the film-star who looked most like our Edie, Gary Cooper would have won first prize. Wally, her spherical groom, was tally-clerk in a pickle factory and wore a collar and tie to work.

Such a match was a clear step up the social ladder for us and my mother was anxious to make a genteel impression on his lot in church. She therefore did her best to keep the wedding a secret from my father's side of the house. His blood relations approached any social occasion in the spirit that to-morrow was the end of the world. All they wanted, from hats off in the hall to the copper blowing his whistle outside the parlour window, was jigging and boozing and free-for-all fighting. To them, a christening was trumpet-call to carousal, a funeral was licence for saturnalia and any three of them gathered together could have turned a UNESCO meeting into a knees-up.

It was only a small church but it was nicely appointed and had a big lily-pond outside the porch. My mother hadn't an in-law in sight when she marshalled her flock for final inspection on the steps, myself in an Eton collar dead set on



"You know damn well we haven't been out for ages."

cutting off my head and my father tight-laced as a lunatic in his best blue serge of two stones ago. Then a taxi pulled up at the kerb and Uncle Grogan, three parts cut, tumbled out. Brandishing a paper bag in one hand and a cricket bat in the other, he made his way unsteadily around the lily-pond.

Although the arch-enemy of gentility in my mother's eyes, Grogan was my favourite uncle because he never visited us without bringing gifts all round. A Billingsgate porter by profession, he had a wonderful wooden hat, language to match and an incandescent temper.

"Hillo, boyo!" he roared. "I've got it for you. Just what you asked for last time. A Phil Mead cricket bat! And there's where the old one's written his name for you!"

I could scarcely breathe for happiness as I took the bat and read the signature below the splice. Before I could raise wind for thanks, he was away to my father and handing him the paper bag.

"The finest crab in all Billingsgate, Mike. Hold it by the handle or he'll be having your thumb. He's not been out of the tank an hour and he'll be fresh as a daisy till you want him."

My father was bred a Bantry fisher-boy and still liked to boil his own crabs.

Uncle Grogan knew where they kept them Danish-style and brought him many a still-twitching shell-fish.

"Come on," said my mother. "In we go. And you leave that crab outside, Michael."

"I don't like it," he grumbled as he put down the bag. "The cat might get it."

From the way that crab was rattling his claws, I'd have laid even money on him getting the cat. Uncle Grogan, ever anxious for trouble, got the tipsy idea that my father was throwing his present away and started sparring up to him on the top step. My mother couldn't face a punch-up in the porch before Wally's lot, and since the organ had started playing by now, allowed her husband to take the crab inside, providing he sat at the back.

I went up the front with the other kids, most of the bat up my jersey, and my father sat in the last pew, putting the bag down at the side. The bride came up the aisle like high noon in white lace, Uncle Grogan mercifully fell asleep and all went splendidly until the parson got to the piece about if any man could show just cause why Edie and Wally might not lawfully be joined together, let him speak now or else hereafter forever hold his peace.

Mother looked round anxiously—you never knew in our family—but all the humans held their peace and only the crab came forward. The bag had tipped over open-mouthed and he appeared on cue and came side-swiping down the aisle. What the hell he had on Wally or Edie. I never found out, unless he'd seen them up to some hanky-panky under the pier at Brighton.

From his deliberate leg action, he was a long-distance crab and, hampered by the green twine tied round each claw, he scuttled slowly over the tiles. His oak-brown carapace veered out diagonally from the pew at first, his eyes waving indecisively on their stalks, then he picked up his direction and set off down the centre of the aisle towards the bride and groom.

My father rose to pursue his escaping sea-food but my mother pulled him back.

"Leave it," she said, loud enough for the rest of our clan to hear. "Leave it alone. Make out it's nothing to do with us. Then Wally's lot will think one of them brought it."

The crab clicked steadily along like a spider in blakeys and all heads swivelled to watch his progress. A heating duct crossed the fairway and he had a rough time negotiating it, shell



"You rang, sir?"

dipping and clattering and claws dragging like kedge-anchors. Finally, the twine fell off, allowing him to get a few nipper-holds, and he fought his dogged way across and continued up the straight to lodge his objection.

Eyeballs could have fallen like marbles from the other lot as they gazed in wonder at this late, brachyural guest. The parson was away off into love, honour and obey before he caught sight of the crawler. He stiffened in his surplice, turned white as a candle and shut his eyes tightly. Shaking his head from side to side, he bit his lip for control and then went gabbling on through the service.

It transpired later that he didn't want to make a fuss in case it turned out that he was the only person in the place who could actually see a crab coming down the aisle.

Tapping away like Black Dog and flexing his pincers menacingly, the crab waddled purposefully on towards the oblivious Edie, in back view a small lighthouse of white organza, her train spread out behind her in two and a half yards of foam. A man from Wally's side got up to intercept the visitor but their matriarch, as cunning as ours, hugged him back.

"Don't touch it," she hissed. "Or they'll be saying one of us brought it in."

It was high time, I thought, that something was done. I was the only man there armed with any sort of weapon suitable to the situation and I just couldn't sit idle while that crustacean threatened my cousin's new-born marriage.

He was a yard short of the train and working up to his finishing burst when I stepped into the aisle and took guard at the wicket. As he came scuttering in from the off, I swung back my cricket-bat, kept my head down and eye along the line, pushed my left foot well out to the pitch of the crab and hit him with a straight drive that would have gladdened the heart of Philip Mead himself . . . It was the best shot I have ever played and sent the shellfish skimming like a discus straight back past the bowler, barely a foot from the ground, not a semblance of a chance and four runs all the way . . . Whizzing down the aisle he went like a baby flying saucer to make first bounce in the porch, zoom off from the top step and



land with a rousing splash plumb in the middle of the lily-pond . . .

I was still holding the glory of my follow-through when half a hundred wedding guests came flapping like vultures about my ears . . . my mother played hell because I'd given the game away to the other lot, my father was livid at losing his fish-tea, Edie burst into tears and said I was trying to muck

up her wedding, Wally belted me one for making her cry, the parson accused me of making mock of holy things, and Uncle Grogan woke up and took it that people were after spurning his gifts again . . . So I shouldered my Philip Mead cricket bat, fled out into the cemetery and spent the rest of the ritual practising late cuts past the groping hand of an alabaster angel.

Taste

THAT film? I made an on-the-spot decision:

It's one of those I *never* have to see.
The bit of it they showed on television
Was quite enough for me.

This play, if you believed what people write,
Has all the virtues needed for success.
They televised a scene the other night—
I tell you it's a *mess*.

Those paintings seemed an interesting show;
I might have made the effort . . . To be frank,
I saw some on TV, and didn't go.
They positively stank.

The novel—I shan't read it. Well, you see,
I really get so little time for books.
And when they showed the author on TV
I didn't like his looks.

That game was good, I hear. It may have been—
I'm not equipped to tell you, off the cuff.
TV gave less than half of it. I mean,
That's nowhere near enough.

— RICHARD MALLETT

Suave and Glittering

By T. S. WATT

WHEN I was nineteen—about thirty years ago, to the nearest decade—it was my main ambition in life to be suave and glittering, like Noël Coward. My friend Sandbach thought that it was a pretty frivolous aim. "If you're going to model yourself on anyone," he said, "why don't you choose a man with some really solid achievements to his credit—Moses, for example?" We argued about it for quite a time, and I remember that we had Noël Coward making rather a mess of things at Mount Sinai, and Moses floundering hopelessly in a *Private Lives* sort of situation, but nothing very much emerged in the end.

Actually, I should have known perfectly well that the chances of my ever becoming suave and glittering were practically non-existent, but in those far-off days nothing seemed impossible, and I threw myself into the undertaking with confident determination. The first essentials, I knew, were a colourful silk

dressing-gown, plenty of brilliantine, and a long cigarette-holder, and there was no great difficulty here; but I had then to manoeuvre these accoutrements into the company of a lot of *soignée* women, in whose exotic apartments I would loll on divans, coolly puffing smoke-rings and drawling cynical witticisms, to the accompaniment of bursts of silvery laughter. I made no headway with this, for a number of reasons.

First, it happened that I worked in a bank, and of course this was a pretty fatal handicap. For one thing, it could hardly be called a glamorous occupation, and for another, and more important, the salary was small. I was living with my parents, but even so, by the time I had paid for my clothes, lunches and gold-tipped Egyptian cigarettes I should be very lucky indeed if I had as much as five shillings a week left with which to support a *soignée* woman, as I hoped to do. In those days five shillings went a good deal further than they do now,

but still, the sum seemed inadequate for my purpose. Nor was this all. Naturally I expected to have romantic adventures, and naturally some of these would be of the kind that went on all night. The sequel to a night of this kind, I knew perfectly well, was a sophisticated breakfast on some sunny veranda or other, at which I would wear my dressing-gown, puff smoke all over the place, and convulse everyone—because other suave and glittering people would be sure to turn up—with my incessant shafts of wit. The trouble was that I had to be at the bank at nine o'clock sharp, to open the letters, so not only was my sophisticated breakfast quite out of the question, but obviously it would be no easy matter to leave behind me the proper impression of devil-may-care cynicism when I leapt out of bed at the crack of eight and hurried off to my work.

Then the right sort of woman seemed hard to find. All I wanted was someone young and beautiful, glamorous, witty and *soignée*, and of course divorced at least once, but wherever I turned I saw nothing but rather powerful girls who played hockey and had never even been married. I still remember one mixed hockey match in which I took part, I suppose with some wild idea that it might possibly lead to a reckless dash through the night in a Hispano-Suiza driven by a svelte nymphomaniac, as in *The Green Hat*, but all that actually happened was that I got the most frightful blow squarely across the nose with a hockey-stick, and had handfuls of wet grass pushed down the back of my neck by three bespectacled girls weighing between them not far short of a quarter of a ton. How Noël Coward would have coped with the situation—or Moses either, for that matter—I simply cannot think, but of course neither of them would ever have been mad enough to go within a mile of a mixed hockey match anyway. As for divorcees, it seemed that round our way no woman ever had the spirit to get a divorce until she had one foot in the grave, and although I was prepared to



"Oh, NO! They can't have had rain like that anywhere."

"Lost His Memory!"

face almost anything to achieve my objective, I was certainly not going to risk getting entangled with some cackling crone of about thirty-five, mopping and mowing over her knitting.

There came a time when I turned from the *soignée* women in despair, deciding to try to develop my Noël Coward personality in the bank—a forlorn hope, if ever there was one. I quickly discovered that it is simply not possible to be suave and glittering and incompetent all at the same time, but not before my efforts to blend an attitude of cool derision with one of apologetic humility had given my Id a wrenching from which I doubt if it has ever recovered. "Oh for a Molloy!" the branch manager would cry, clutching at his sparse locks. Molloy was my predecessor, and I would make conciliatory noises and polish my glasses in a cynical way. "Watt will work it out quite quickly in his head!" the chief cashier would hiss, wiping a little foam from his lips, while I rushed urbanely into the men's cloakroom.

Later on, in the R.A.F., it was the same story. I had hoped to be a hero, and to superimpose my suavity and glitter on that, but as it turned out I simply spent five years in avoiding people who threatened to ask me questions about electricity.

It is all long, long ago, and yet even now, when I have tea in some smart café or other, and the band plays one of the old tunes, which it always does, for obvious reasons, and some *soignée* woman lights an Egyptian cigarette, I sometimes find myself glancing cynically around, under half-closed lids, feeling the old urge come upon me once more. But it is better as it is. Sooner or later every suave and glittering young man must face the task of turning himself into a suave and glittering *old* man, and it is not one that I should fancy.

☆

"CIVIL SERVICE, 1960

The Chairman of the Urban District Council, with members and officers of the Council, and their wives, attended morning service at St. Michael's on Sunday, 26th June.

The service was conducted by the Vicar who, as is usual on these occasions, looked at the Council and prayed for the town."

Church Magazine

But they looked right back.

NO, sir. No, no. I don't recall your name:

And may I add, sir, that I feel no shame?

Thrice you have goaded me with giggling glee—

"You don't remember me! Ha, ha! He, he!"

"The innuendo being," as they say, That my poor memory has passed away. Twice I replied to this absurd assault With insincerity, my only fault.

Twice I pretended that I knew your face—

Now let me tell you, that is *not* the case. (I would not wager that we never met:

But it's a face quite easy to forget.)

Twice I endeavoured, as I always do, With kindly subterfuge to find a clue.

"Of course—of course," I muttered, "but, you know,

You are so like my old friend Eustace Blow."

"I do remember. But I can't recall Our *last* gay meeting. Was it the Albert Hall?"

To such old gambits gentlemen reply With names and details—where—and when—and why.

But you continued to insult and sneer: Permit me, then, to make the matter clear.

There is a limit, sir, to what the brain Can usefully at any time contain: And over-loading is no wiser there Than on the road, at sea, or in the air. On lengthy voyages a man will find He gathers much that's better left behind,

Bronze trays, and dolls, and hats of many sorts,

Repulsive "souvenirs" from all the ports.

So one fine morning on the journey back It is almost impossible to pack.

He puts his bursting bags upon his bunk And ruthlessly eliminates the junk.

'That is the sensible, the one design At any age—especially at mine— For what's called Memory. No man can hold

All that he sees, or studies, or is told. From which it follows he's a right to say What he will keep, and what he'll throw away.

This is not "loss of memory," you ass, But Scientific Sifting From the Mass.

O surely here, as in his vows and views, A democrat must be allowed to *choose*. Well, for example, though I hate to boast

I can recite more poetry than most. You can't think how astonished I shall be

If you can say more Tennyson than me. I can identify some sixty stars, But hardly know the breeds of any cars: And can I be expected to repeat The names of all the million men I meet?

Some strangers' names I carefully record,

But many others must go overboard: And now I note your manners—which displease—

I rather feel that yours was one of these. If so, I am so sure that I was right I do not want to know it now. Good night.

— A. P. H.





Wrapping It Up

IN Britain we have recently become unbelievably clean-food conscious. Every newspaper has been dripping clean food supplements to celebrate the centenary of the Food and Drugs Act and no doubt to collect some honest pennies from the hundreds of firms that now cater for this desire to make a pure Heaven for us all.

There are many investment lessons to be learned from these reminders of our craze for cleanliness. These lessons may not be verified immediately while the security markets of the world are being shaken by Wall Street jitters but, as sure as the day follows night, they will ultimately come true.

The greatest lesson of them all is the unbelievable amount of paper in which our prophylactic civilization has to be wrapped. There are layers and layers of it around virtually everything we buy. The desire for germless purity demands it. The inexorable move towards vast, impersonal self-service stores will accentuate it. Everything which is on offer there must be available ready weighed and packed and protected from the microbes in the air and the soiling caresses of customers' hands.

More paper, more Cellophane, more plastic bags, more Sellotape—all this means more profits to the big paper manufacturers and also to the chemical industry which produces the basic materials in which we now wrap most of our consumer goods and even ourselves.

The Bowater Group is unquestionably one of the most dynamic in the world paper industry. It has spread its interest in the New World. It is entrenching itself solidly into that of the Common Market. It has the closest of relations with the Scandinavian paper industry of the European Free Trade Association. Its turnover figures for the current year are going to astonish many people.

Then there is the A. E. Reed group, whose complicated relations with the *Daily Mirror* and *Sunday Pictorial* have

recently been tidied up. It is also sharing in this tremendous bonanza of wrapping paper. Spicers and Wiggins Teape are two other companies whose trade is steadily expanding and whose shares should ride out any storm which the markets may be unleashing.

To investors looking for shelter from the winds that may blow from Wall Street there is a great deal to learn from the recent experience of the British cotton trade. Two years ago no words of criticism and condemnation were too harsh for the Lancashire textile industry and some of the most august institutional investors were ruefully cutting their losses and dumping shares on an unwilling market.

Now see the miracle of recovery. It is typified by the recently published figures of Calico Printers' Association for the year to June 30. The profits have



Mixed Kin

THE lilies may now recall that some things are not so separate as they seem. For lilies are nearly related to onions. An improving elder, introducing me in childhood to Higher Values, once observed "The Chinese, you know, have a saying: If a man has two loaves he will sell one and buy a lily."

A few years later, in the priggishness of adolescence, I tried this lily/loaf gambit on another senior. His reply was, "Of course. Some lily bulbs are very good to eat, and to exchange a surplus or unwanted loaf for a wanted bulb would be sensible." Homework was indicated. I found that in the Far East the tiger lily had been grown as a field crop, for its edible bulbs, for more than a thousand years before its introduction into Britain in 1804.

That flower/food relationship is far from being unique. Dr. Dahl's dahlias (which were once Georginas) were first introduced from Mexico with the idea that their tubers might be eaten in preference to potatoes. Of which it is said in the great "History and Social Influence of the Potato" by the late

septupled, the dividend has gone up from 22½ to 40 per cent and there is to be a 100 per cent scrip distribution. Accompanying these figures is an indication that there were satisfactory improvements in all sections of the Association's activities and that the revival of the demand for textiles was well maintained throughout the year.

This company has the immense advantage of having "invented" the process of manufacturing Terylene and is thus earning a substantial royalty income from I.C.I. in this country and from other manufacturers of this products overseas. Those earnings will vanish as the patents expire; but this apart Calico Printers are doing extraordinarily well in their own trading activities and even the greatly increased distribution is generously covered by earnings.

— LOMBARD LANE

Redcliffe N. Salaman (M.D., F.R.S.):

Rudbeck in 1658 described the potato as equally suitable for the flower border as the table. It will be remembered that in order to popularize the potato, Louis XVI accepted a bouquet of potato blooms from Parmentier, and Marie Antoinette wore one in her hair. In my genetic cultures I have frequently raised varieties which by the abundance and beauty of their flowers would have pleased the most eclectic of gardeners.

The potato is *Solanum tuberosum*—and the nearly related *Solanum crispum*, also from South America, is one of the loveliest of all creeper-climbers. Perhaps a bit inhibited by some up-country temperatures but down in the south-west you may see it spread itself twenty-five feet along a garden wall and then proceed kindly to beautify, with a magnificent display of blue-purple blossom, a dull tool-shed or outhouse.

Next, very close cousins, are tomatoes. If you've time to waste on playful and unprofitable grafting you can grow tomatoes and potatoes on one and the same plant.

Many piquant near-kinships are overlooked by the casual. Jerusalem artichokes and sunflowers; angelica, cow-parsley or hogweed and hemlock; cabbages and wallflowers; or even elm trees and stinging nettles. Oddly enough, sweet peas (*Lathyrus*) are not quite so close as some might guess to green peas (*Pisum*)—which have been eaten as the old pease of "Pease-porridge hot, pease-porridge cold," long centuries before anyone had thought of marrowfat, sugar peas, asparagus peas or other such tender verdant delicacies.

— J. D. U. WARD

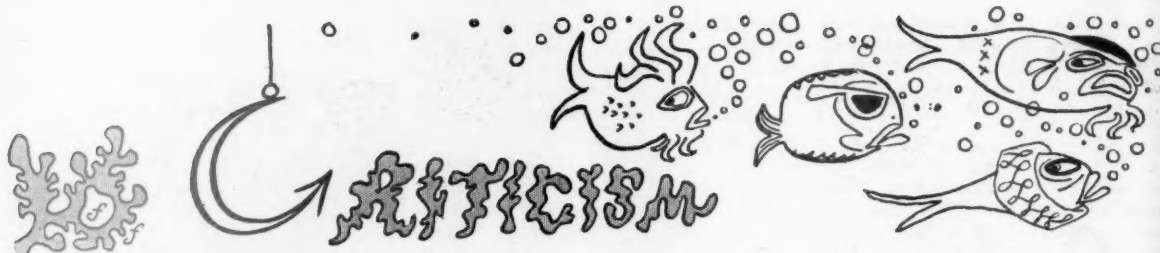
LADIES' DAY



"Oh, jolly good shot, Eileen!!!"

"Angela played beautifully until she broke a shoulder-strap."





AT THE PICTURES

Jazz on a Summer's Day
Strangers When We Meet

THE feature-length colour documentary *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (Director: Bert Stern)—which as shown to the press ran for 75 minutes, though all the official information gives its length as 85—is about the July jazz festival at Newport, Rhode Island, and should appeal to a great number of people besides jazz fans. The dedicated fans, indeed, will probably object that visually it is far too distracting. In fact it is a real film, designed as a whole within the framework of the day and the place, from the first moment when the titles appear over cleverly angled and composed fragmentary shots of the twisting, undulating reflections of boats beside the Newport quays.

Fine pictures of the day's yacht-racing in which some of them take part are cut in at times during the jazz-playing, often making the sort of subtle visual-aural effect that only the film can make. It could be that I was over-ingenuous, but I believe I noticed this example: the moment when, as we listen to the piano-playing of

Thelonius Monk and can imagine, from the convergence of treble and bass, that his hands are meeting to cross on the keyboard, we see two yachts, stem on to the camera, the nearer tilting to one corner of the screen and the further the opposite way so that the two masts form an X...

All right, perhaps that is forcing it a bit; but there are innumerable simpler and more obvious effects of that kind which are pleasing and beautiful—for instance the shots of sunlit water sliding quickly past to the sound of a brisk connecting ripple on the guitar (I forget whose). Apart from this, much of the film is concerned with people: close-ups of those playing or singing (Jimmy Giuffrè almost imperceptibly adumbrating a sad shaking of the head as he plays a minor-key phrase, the outline of Gerry Mulligan's chin and throat slightly changing throughout a saxophone passage against the background of Art Farmer's hands on the trombone, Chico Hamilton's head glittering with sweat as he attacks the drums, positively Anita O'Day's back teeth as she belts out a song), and incessantly odd and amusing shots of those listening (the girl whose hat keeps falling sideways, the man who is plainly wondering whether

his neighbours can really be enjoying it, the girl bored and impatient with the loud-speaker's critical detail about some performer). Some things here and there are held too long for satisfactory balance, but all told this is a fascinating experience, enjoyable in many different ways.

Commercial perhaps, and as glossy as could be, *Strangers When We Meet* (Director: Richard Quine) is all the same no insult to anyone's intelligence: it is full of excellent, entertaining detail and its characters' motives are understandable and credible. The theme is marital infidelity, but the film has much more to offer than steamy passions and deception and guilt and self-sacrifice and people with whom the simpler hearts in the audience can identify themselves. It is from a novel by Evan Hunter, who wrote the script, and seems to be an unusually successful adaptation. As a rule the emotions and motives in a filmed novel come to seem unlikely because we get no time to grasp all the influences that shaped them; here, inventive and perceptive screenwriting again and again pays off in valuable overtones and implications.

This is in essentials the sort of thing often dismissed as a "woman's picture" and I make no great claims for it, but it has some very good points. Larry (Kirk Douglas), the unfaithful husband, is a believable architect and one can understand his enthusiasm for the striking house he is designing. (It was actually built while the film was being made, and we watch its progress.) Maggie (Kim Novak), the unfaithful wife, is no cliché character: unhappily married (the scenes with her insensitive husband are designed to strike many a responsive chord), she is a push-over for almost any sexual temptation, as Larry after a time is shocked to discover. Ernie Kovacs contributes a splendid sketch of a novelist who snarls contemptuously at the critics but is really wounded by their disesteem and desperate to understand the reason for it. There are degrees of merit even among commercial glossies, and this is a good one.

Survey
(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

It Started in Naples might have been so good... and plainly most people aren't worried by what seems to me to spoil it: the continual evidence that this is an "English version," told not in the best and most effective way but in the best and most effective way consistent with making



[Strangers When We Meet]

Larry Coe—KIRK DOUGLAS

Roger Altar—ERNIE KOVACS

Maggie Gault—KIM NOVAK

the whole thing easy to dub. There is no obvious dubbing, but again and again you can see them leaning over backwards to avoid it—by off-screen narrative, by long shots where the movement of the characters' lips isn't visible, by dialogue devices like (Italian to Italian girl) "Let me try it in English, that seems to work better with you" or (to Italian child) "Talk English, how many times must I tell you," by the splitting of duologues into alternate close-ups . . . There are good funny scenes and the photography of Capri is beautiful, but the feeling that the script had to fulfil conditions that were merely mechanical is a perpetual irritation. Also in London: *Il Tetto* (24/8/60), *Black Orpheus* (8/6/60), *The Fugitive Kind* (14/9/60), *Let's Make Love* (7/9/60) and *Ocean's Eleven* (7/9/60).

It Started in Naples (100 mins.) is also among the releases, but far and away the best and most enjoyable is *The Apartment* (3/8/60—125 mins.).

— RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE PLAY

Once Upon a Mattress (STRAND)

Horses in Midstream (VAUDEVILLE)

THE book of *Once Upon a Mattress* is the work of three writers, one of whom also did the lyrics, which are pretty neat. I suppose the other two divided the dialogue between them, one taking the period stuff ("Pardon, Sir Wizard, but my friend the Minstrel here is a great admirer of yours"), and the other filling in with the more routine "It's a shame-up, you've got it all wrong." The music is by Mary Rodgers, and is very lively at times, particularly in its rhythms, with a tune or two that might stick, with luck. But the lady deserves kinder associations. The play is poor stuff, and lapses in taste here and there. One of the leading sopranos explains almost before we've been introduced that she is in the family way, and the gallant knight responsible immediately joins her to sing the duet, "In a Little While," which goes, in part,

"My time is at a premium
And soon the world will see me a m—
—eternal bride to be . . ."

and the King, who is dumb of a curse, mimes this situation to the Jester by tucking his crown under the front of his gown and prancing in profile. I expect I'm old-fashioned.

The story is based on the fairy tale about the Princess who slept on a pea—or didn't, I forget—and in this version the incident becomes a so-called Royalty Test; if the Princess is sensitive enough to feel the pea she will be eligible to marry Prince Dauntless the Drab (she is Princess Winnifred the Woebegone), and until he's married no other ladies of the court can marry, which puts a fine dramatic edge on the predicament of the soprano mentioned earlier.

If not redeemed, the evening is at least made endurable by the Winnifred of Jane Connell, a comedienne of galvanic drive



Princess Winnifred—JANE CONNELL

[Once Upon a Mattress

with a voice like a well-tempered bandsaw, who is so funny when she gets the chance that I would walk a mile to see her fully extended. I would walk more than a mile to see Max Wall out of this production and into another one. As the Jester he isn't extended at all, which saddens me a lot.

The appearance of Miss Francoise Rosay in London is an event which might have been celebrated more suitably than in Mr. Andrew Rosenthal's *Horses in Midstream*, a leisurely study of the pros and cons of living in sin. As Anne Marie, happily unmarried for thirty years to shaggy old Charles Pine (Malcolm Keen) in a villa on Elba, she sees no reason why Charles's granddaughter, Trina (who seeks him out, full of youthful prejudice but soon to dote on his grey hairs), should not undertake a like entanglement with Tom Atwood, a neighbour on the island, though she is engaged to a rich stuffed shirt back home in Massachusetts. Charles left his wife in 1920-odd on meeting Anne Marie in a

Paris chemist's. She ran off with him just as promptly. Atwood has kicked his wife downstairs back home in England, and is now dedicated to the systematic seduction of Elba's young ladies. No one will divorce anyone else.

Such drama as there is, and Miss Rosay's big scene, follow the disclosure that Charles can't stomach the idea of his granddaughter's giving up all for love; it isn't that the moral worries him; it's simply that he has missed his abandoned folks all this time, and fears that Trina will do the same. Anne Marie, pardonably surprised that the grievance has taken thirty years to come out, is nevertheless quick to blame herself for ruining his life. All ends morally, though with an odd, dramatically unco-ordinated coda in the final scene between the two old folk.

Even Miss Rosay and Mr. Keen, gruffing and growling together, fail to lend much interest to these events. But at least the eye can dwell on Hutchinson Scott's mouth-watering set, and there is a passing compulsion in the melancholy sound of mountain church-bells, off.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Oliver! A very good musical from Lionel Bart and Dickens (New—6/7/60). *The Tiger and the Horse*. Redgrave père et fille in a Robert Bolt think piece (Queen's—31/8/60). *The Caretaker*, virtuoso Pleasance in vintage Pinter (Duchess—11/5/60).

— J. B. BOOTHROYD

REP. SELECTION

Belgrade, Coventry, *Hassan*, until October 1st.
Playhouse, Derby, *The Kidders*, until October 8th.
Ipswich Theatre, *The Aspern Papers*, until October 8th.
Colchester Rep., *Death of a Lady*, until October 1st.



AT THE OPERA

Das Rheingold—Die Walküre (ROYAL OPERA HOUSE)

OF twelve singers in *Rheingold* three were brought in from Germany. Two of these three were brilliant. The Loge of Richard Holm has always been a bar-by-bar joy to eye and ear. Gerhard Stolze (newcomer) as Mime looked like Neanderthal man in one of those speculative mock-ups at the Natural History Museum. He produced pewtery yet beautiful and poignant phrasing. The new Wotan (succeeded in later sections of the *Ring* cycles by the unmatched Hans Hotter) was Hermann Uhde. Mr. Uhde's tone was rich and musicianly; but, although we know him to be a first rate actor, he looked and behaved like a junior Master-singer, which was pretty incongruous.

In this company the nine resident singers, beginning with three melodious and superbly articulate Rhinemaidens, did well; so well, in fact, that the resident company's formative years—often a nightmare of groping and barking immaturity—may be regarded as over. The mellow, muscular singing of David Ward, the new Fasolt, and Forbes Robinson, the new Donner, are further proof that this country has operatic personalities (not operatic voices merely) like any other and, at last, the means of nursing them. It seems only yesterday that Mr. Ward was a R.C.M. student, pulling beer in a Shaftesbury Avenue pub at nights to make ends meet. He has since "made" Bayreuth as Titirel (*Parsifal*). In *Walküre* his Hunting singing, equally fluent, strong and fine-grained, was handicapped by a clean-shaven, young-husband make-up laughably at variance

with every note of his music, especially the black menace of the tubas' motif.

Visually Covent Garden's *Ring* becomes increasingly limp. Why a new cyclorama if the designs you project on to it are less agreeable to look at than the old wrinkles? The *Walküre* first act was a scandal of reticence and points passed over. No supper table, no supper, no rapport between the glow of the hearth and the gleam of the sword hilt. What I would like to see one day is a production as splendidly pointed and co-ordinated as the singing of Brunnhilde's eight sister-valkyries (all English), a double-quartet which, in this work, I would back against any in the world.

Rudolf Kempe's *Rheingold* conducting was a model; the orchestral playing in consequence was sensitive, strong, sensuous and exact. I wish I could say the same of *Walküre* Act 1. What a falling off was there!

—CHARLES REID

ON THE AIR

Mermaid Haven

IT grieves me to hear that Hans and Lotte Hass are returning to dry-land research and I am going to miss our cosy, underwater evenings together. They've given us a lot of amusement, education and release down there with Neptune, gliding among the gropers and sharks and ballet-clouds of little fish, diving into the looming mystery of silted wrecks, and soaring down the secret, shaggy mountains of the sea. There is a soothing relaxation in contemplating their graceful slow-motion through the dim-lit water and I know of nothing on television better equipped than "Adventure with Hans and Lotte Hass" (BBC) to untie the knots in your neck-muscles and coax the tension out of your ears. Little wonder they are putting guppies in dentists' waiting-rooms.

With every respect to the admirable Hans, however, I shall miss Lotte most of all. Being a skilful director who knows the ability of a pretty woman to make fans and influence viewers, he ensures whenever he can in his deep-sea sagas that we get a look at Lotte every five minutes. And it saddens me to think that a time is coming when I shall no more see those Friday flashes of sparkling, open-air Lotte in her bikini, Lotte in her business bathing-costume, Lotte gazing Dora-like down her husband's microscope, Lotte underwater with her hair streaming back like the coral she's collecting, and Lotte encased in a black, rubber frog-man's suit and still contriving to look indisputably female.

I am a regular watcher of all these nature-loving programmes but I am mentally inhibited from taking those on *terra*

firma with quite the same abandon as those submarine. On land I am ever conscious of the penumbral presence of the production team; I have at the back of my mind, the whole time the Stone Age bushman is chipping a weevil-frying-pan out of a kangaroo's pelvis, that all around him, just out of shot, are cameramen, light-holders, sound engineers and that boy with the clacking-board. I am haunted, too, by a sort of Steinberg film-vision of a man photographing a man photographing a man photographing Armand and Michaela Denis photographing a chimpanzee; which animal, in his turn, is photographing Armand and Michaela Denis and being photographed by another chimpanzee who is being photographed by another chimpanzee . . . and so on away into infinity. And I know that some day David Attenborough will put his hand down one of those fearsome seabird's holes and find it shaken at the other end by Peter Scott.

The prospect before us is cheered by the return of the "Arthur Haynes Show" (ATV) which, during its last run, was the brightest of the commercial comedy offerings. The star is a comedian who has steadily improved his technique since his days with the Charlie Chester Gang and he is now one of the best television mimes in the business. The formula evolved for his exchanges with Nicholas Parsons is an interesting reversal of the classic double-act tradition of Scott and Whaley, Abbott and Costello, or Hancock and James, in which the straight man mercilessly exploits the gullibility of the comic. With Haynes and Parsons it is the straight man who is the underdog; from the very first word he is put upon and out-smarted by the engaging, barefaced villain of a clown. I trust that this trend is symbolic of the coming rise to power of the buffoons.

The new series did not start with quite the previous crackle and it wasn't until the last Taxi-to-Maddox-Street sketch that the humour really sparked in the old style. Time will no doubt use the talent to fuller effect but it struck me that the two song-cycles by Aileen Cochrane, each of fair length, in addition to the piano-spot of Ken Morris, took rather a slice out of the time for comedy and pulled down the pace of the show. A pure mime sketch for Arthur Haynes, to replace the old Oscar pieces, was missed by all.

Although I am not strong on Westerns and am thus no prairie-connoisseur, I thought that "Tenderfoot" (BBC) got off to a fair start. I haven't found myself identifying completely with Tom Brewster, but this merely goes to emphasize that the series is pitched at the teenager and below. I find myself transferring strongly to one of those middle-aged father-figures muddling and bumbling indecisively until the clear-headed young law-student arrives and cuts through to the heart of their problems. Still, it gives me no little satisfaction to be in at the decay of a cliché; at last, even if only in the shape of a correspondence course, someone is bringing some law West of Pecos.

—PATRICK RYAN

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Cinema." Odeon, Doncaster.

"Covering Punch." Central Library and Art Gallery, Dudley, from October 3rd.

BOOKING OFFICE

YOUNG GENTLEMAN REQUIRED

By SIMON RAVEN

Personal Column. Charles Belgrave. Hutchinson, 30/-

ON leave from Tanganyika in 1925, apprehensive as to where the Colonial Office would next post him and depressed by the thought of the meagre salary he would receive for going there, Charles Belgrave spotted an advertisement in the Personal Column of *The Times*: "Young Gentleman required . . . for service in an Eastern State. Good salary and prospects . . ." Preferring to court evils which he knew not of rather than to endure those he could anticipate all too clearly, the young Colonial Servant sent in his application . . . but for what? After several interviews, one of them at the India Office, the matter was resolved: the Ruler of Bahrain wanted an adviser who was to be independent of the British Political Agency (albeit the adviser was to be British and the Agency itself was to make the appointment); and Mr. Belgrave, despite a declared fondness for painting and his impending acquisition of a wife, was, after all, a young gentleman and would just about fill the bill.

Bahrain, then as now, was a small and independent island sheikhdom, situated in the Persian Gulf and governed by an absolute ruler, which enjoyed treaty relations with Great Britain. (Hence the Agency.) These days it is full of oil-wells, American technicians and amenities, British troops and political dissidents. In 1925 there wasn't a fan or a refrigerator in the place, the economy was totally dependent on the annual pearl-fishing season, and no one had heard of democracy. Some people have found it deplorable that the post of Adviser should have been hawked anonymously in a Personal Column; but plainly this procedure corresponded to the very limited means of the country, while anonymity might serve to intrigue those who, had Bahrain been mentioned outright, would have been either horrified or contemptuous. But let all this be as it may be, young Charles Belgrave, delighted with £720 per annum and a brand new wife, was prepared to face anything; and now,

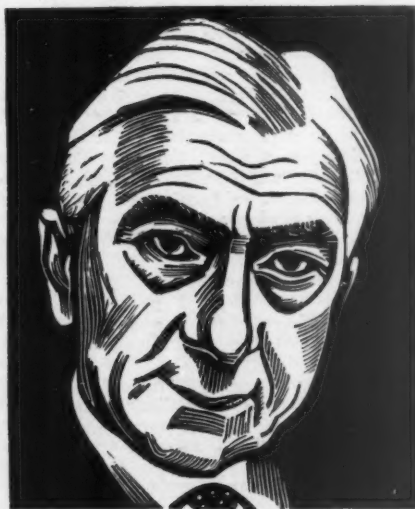
in *Personal Column* and more than thirty years later, the retired Sir Charles Belgrave has settled down coolly but with affection to tell us exactly what he faced.

I cannot say this is a well-written book. There is much irrelevant chatter, early on, about the author's family, and a tiresome account, coy where it is not scrappy, of his honeymoon journey to the Persian Gulf. But once Belgrave gets to Bahrain and encounters the ruling Sheikh Hamed there is seldom lack of interest. In name, it seems, he was Financial Adviser to the Sheikh: in practice he more or less ran the country. Certainly he handled the Exchequer—and very tricky it was until, in the middle thirties, the oil began to flow—but he was also Chief of Police; a leading Judge (there is no written code in Bahrain, "so judgments had to depend on common sense"); liaison officer between the Sheikh and the British Agency (and publicity officer in general); an educational and penal reformer; the close and beloved companion of Sheikh

Hamed and his successor; and final consultant as to all diseases (not few) of the Bahraini body politic. In short he had just the job which Evelyn Waugh dreamed up, in *Black Mischief*, for Basil Seal. Unlike the unspeakable Basil, however, Sir Charles was neither dishonest, humorous nor clever; so that his Sheikhdom, while it did not dissolve in farce and depredation, entered a new era in its history inflexible and unaware.

For oil and the war brought money and knowledge to the Bahrainis, and with these came aspiration. Sir Charles, on the defensive by now, speaks of a new liberalism in the ruling family, of committees for this and that which actually elected some of their members. But in effect the Sheikh remained an absolute ruler: the feasts and the hunting parties still took their serene course; the minor sheikhs still clamoured for more money; the old men still muttered whenever the most nugatory reform was proposed. Meanwhile, Nasser spoke in Cairo and the slick-suited agitators had already reached Bahrain. The British Agency, equivocating in good post-war fashion, contradicted itself hourly: Sir Charles, seeing there must be concessions, yet urged that they be moderate and slow. Since the ground had not been prepared beforehand, he was right; the point is, of course, that the ground *should* have been prepared. But yet again, we cannot blame Sir Charles for not preparing it. An honourable man of limited ability and foresight, he had done his best after his lights and his thirty years were full of achievement; at the very least he had procured rough justice and removed much poverty. He had done all that could be expected of the "young gentleman" who was "required" in 1925: by 1955 he was no longer young and the requirements no longer included gentility.

PRESENTING THE CRITICS



STRAUSFELD

26—A. V. COOKMAN
Theatre, The Times

NEW NOVELS

Take a Girl Like You. Kingsley Amis.

Gollancz, 18/-

The She-Wolf of France. Maurice Druon. Hart-Davis, 18/-

Skrine. Kathleen Sully. Peter Davies, 13/6

The Venus of Konpara. John Masters. Michael Joseph, 16/-

Take a Girl Like You is Mr. Amis's best novel so far. The setting is realistic but heightened by grotesquerie. He always makes one feel that the milieu he describes are the points at which the contemporary world reveals its essence: the common frontier of education and the drink traffic is where life is at its most real. This time his leading characters are a drunken, libidinous grammar-school master and a

bird-witted female teacher from a junior school who laps up the women's magazines and preserves her virginity, this feat of preservation providing the plot. As well as being about chaps and bars and jazz and unattractive towns the novel is, as usual, about goodness. The ethical argument is carried on through episodes of packed comic invention. This must be one of the most variously funny novels in the language. Some of the drinking scenes really are Dickensian, unlike most writing to which the term is applied.

Mr. Amis shares with Dickens a liking for the convivial, a fascination with urban landscapes in decay, high spirits, a tendency to caricature where he does not know and sheer profusion. For him the problem of responsibility is not so simple as it was for Dickens, who saw evils and remedies simply and was faced only by a problem in persuasion. Mr. Amis has had to distinguish between rival moralities and to establish step by step a pattern of conduct that will seem relevant not only among congregations or in London clubs or even at branch meetings but in the narrow, rapid world of late-adolescence. It is this side of his work that was ignored in the luke-warm reception of his second novel, *That Uncertain Feeling*, which was judged mainly on its farcical passages. In *Take a Girl Like You* all Mr. Amis's gifts work together.

The She-Wolf of France is the fifth in Monsieur Druon's exciting series about fourteenth-century France. The interest is focused on Charles IV's sister Isabella, Edward II's wife, though as before there is a very wide coverage of Western Europe with scenes at the Papal Court, in the French country-side, in Hainault and in Paris. Monsieur Druon never loses sight of people while sweeping the horizon for trends. His emphasis on the importance of intrigue and personal relationships does not

mean he ignores exports or farming or Lombard finance; but he refuses to accept the view of the past that omits what people who lived at the time thought important. He seems to be able to make anything interesting, even repetitions of genealogical facts.

Shrine is about a survivor from a cataclysm—perhaps, though it is not stated, the H-bomb. The air of the novel is allegorical but the events are narrated with more immediacy than is usual in allegory and the later stages of the story become quite exciting. Mrs. Sully is baffling; but then she often is. However, she still has her power to grip you firmly while she transfigures the familiar by her bizarre imagination.

The Venus of Konpara is an unlikely story told with such conviction and efficiency that I only occasionally drew breath and began to ask questions. At the end of the nineteenth century an Indian native state is having a dam built by a British contractor who discovers part of a statue dating from the time when the Dravidians, whose descendants are now illiterate villagers, ruled the country. The young heir to the empty throne, the jealous, ineffectual British Resident, his artist wife, a saintly archaeologist, various Indians with conflicting interests, the rough, sensitive contractor and a mysterious dancer who is a Dravidian but fit to be a queen are involved in the intrigues and the violence caused by the discovery. Some of the mystical bits about race and love do not come off and the dancer remains, as perhaps she was meant to, non-human; but the tale races you along.

—R. G. G. PRICE

TRIBUTE BY A FRIEND

Nehru, The Years of Power. Vincent Sheean, *Gollancz*, 21/-

It looks as if, before the hagiologists have done with him, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru will have been as much written about as Napoleon Bonaparte. The latest to enter this crowded biographical area is Mr. Vincent Sheean, holding in his confiding, warm, little hand a tremendous collection of complimentary wreaths. Reviewing Dr. Michael Brecher's ponderous compilation on the same theme, in *Punch* a year ago, I said that I liked my hagiology candid and unashamed and not dressed up as history.

I am agreeably surprised by my own consistency. How much I prefer Mr. Sheean's persuasive, attractive and utterly biased portrait to Dr. Brecher's monument of pseudo-objectivity. The origins of Mr. Sheean's book are profoundly respectable: he wants to tell the world about a friend, whom he loves and admires, and who has had a deep and enduring influence on his own life and thought.

Since he is a highly accomplished writer, with an easy, elegant prose style; since he has a considerable knowledge and experience of the three countries—India, Kashmir and England—which have strongly affected Nehru's intellectual and spiritual development and mature outlook;

and since he himself has integrity, sensibility and courtesy, he has written a book which is a delight to read. Even the few factual errors I found entrancing, for example, a vivid description of Indian Army officers, listening to Nehru with rapt attention, and yelling their applause "in the best accents of Sandwich." Ouida, after all, was quite a hero-worshipper, too.

I admit Mr. Sheean disarmed me from the outset by dedicating his book to the memory of my friend and brother-officer—one of the best, most vivid and bravest men I ever knew—Unni Nayar, who was killed, as a U.N. officer, in Korea ten years ago. And while his book may not have greatly altered my views on Nehru the politician, it has added a great deal to my understanding of, and liking for, Nehru the human being.

—JOHN CONNELL

TRIBUTE BY A GRANDDAUGHTER

My Grandmothers and I. Diana Holman Hunt, *Hamish Hamilton*, 21/-

When Mrs. Holman Hunt, the widow of the painter, gave a tea party the twenty-four teacups had labels tied to their handles. These labels informed a later generation that Dickens, Burne-Jones, Meredith or some other top level Victorian celebrity had drunk his tea from this particular cup. Diana Holman Hunt, granddaughter of the hostess, tells us however that the labelled tea service was misleading as the two dozen great men had never all attended a Holman Hunt tea-party on the same day. Miss Holman Hunt also admits that she has adopted much the same principle in her account of her early life when she was sent backwards and forwards like a parcel between a maternal grandmother who lived a spoilt life among violet-scented lace pillows, and her father's mother who set electric booby traps every night in case burglars should attempt to break into the rotting splendours of Holman Hunt's house in West Kensington. This rearrangement of events gives Miss Holman Hunt's portrait a slight air of being a Fancy Head—that last insult to the Serious Artist of the nineteenth century. It is however interesting to learn that George Meredith posed for Henry Wallis's picture of the Death of Chatterton, and that the painter afterwards eloped with Mrs. Meredith. It is difficult not to feel that Miss Holman Hunt preferred the cosy house of her more conventional grandmother to the rigours of Mrs. Holman Hunt's post-Pre-Raphaelite establishment. The book contains a remarkable photograph of the bearded painter of "The Scapegoat" leaving a royal garden party in a grey top hat, and another of him in levee dress when the length of his beard forced him to wear the Order of Merit at waist level. Standing beside him is his son, the author's father, who, returning after an absence of years, took his daughter out for the evening with more regard for his own wild tastes than for her fifteen years. Consequently she is probably the only person ever to have danced at the Forty-Three in a white Confirmation frock.

—VIOLET POWELL



GENTLEMEN OF JAPAN

A History of Modern Japan. Richard Storry. Penguin Books, 4/-

The editors of the excellent Pelican History of the Modern World long ago decided (and rightly so) "that the old and familiar emphasis upon national history has meant sufficient to justify its continuance in this series." This latest addition is well up to the high standard of its predecessors. Though the title suggests that Mr. Storry is only concerned with the Japan that emerged as a result of Commodore Perry's fateful visit in the summer of 1853, the first eighty or so pages of his book offer a vivid shorthand account of earlier Japanese history from its grim mythologic beginnings to the great mediæval centuries and the subsequent "time of troubles." He is good on Shinto and on the central pieties and loyalties of the extraordinary nation he is discussing, but one wishes that he could have said more about the Japanese variants of Buddhism. In her celebrated account of Japanese culture patterns, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, the late Ruth Benedict stressed the absence of any doctrine of the Fall of Man ("A moral code," remarked a famous Shintoist griggishly in the eighteenth century, "was good for the Chinese whose inferior natures required such artificial means of restraint"). If this is true, it goes far to explain the peculiar autonomy and rigidity of Japanese mores.

Mr. Storry's study throws light on a number of factors—ethnological, economic, political—that have gone to make up the contemporary image of Japan. He wears his learning lightly, he writes vividly and (how rare this is in a present-day historian!) he does not disdain the anecdote. The result is the easiest holiday-task reading.

— PETER JEVONS

GENTLEMAN OF ENGLAND

English Excursions. By Geoffrey Grigson. *Country Life*, 30/-.

Gilbert White and his friends quoted Virgil to a rather special echo in Hampshire; and some of the nymph's replies have caught the ear of Mr. Grigson, who felicitously translates their spirit in a passage on anathoths. The excursions of the title are as much journeys in the hinterland of his mind as into towns, villages, cities and mountains at home and abroad. It is his Englishness which justifies him in describing cliff dwellings in New Mexico within the same brackets as explorations of the Severn's bone-bed at Aust Ferry. Everywhere he takes you he illuminates with imagination that which he factually describes; as for example when he terms Silbury Hill "a dark emphasis in a light landscape"; or, of a Triassic shelf: "it seems that one is walking across the substance of time." He reflects the light that nearly was on sea and land.

Make room for this book on your bedside table even at the expense of a thumb-favourite.

— R. C. SCRIVEN



CREDIT BALANCE

The Folk Songs of North America. Alan Lomax. Cassell, 105/-. Over 300 songs collected by the master, some with piano accompaniment, all with guitar chords indicated. Learned but breezy commentary and pretty decorations. A wonderful great plum-cake of a book.

A Companion to Murder. E. Spencer Shew. Cassell, 25/-. Dictionary of leading murder cases 1900-50, biographies of advocates and judges and oddments like notes on "Justifiable Homicide" and "Provocation." Second ragbag to follow, which may explain the omission of some classics, e.g. Thompson-Bywaters. A curious enterprise but useful and enjoyable, given that violent death is entertaining. Frankness about judges patchy, e.g. reference to Horridge's pomposity and rudeness but not to Singleton's chattering.

Concise Encyclopædia of Western Philosophy. Ed. J. O. Urmson. Hutchinson, 50/-. Legions of readers who would like to keep *au fait* with all the current trends in philosophy but have not the time, and more legions who feel the need for a chart through the manifold thickets of philosophy since philosophy began, will welcome this goldmine of a volume, where it is all expertly boiled down and presented lucidly by the most able writers of the day.

Chance, Skill and Luck. John Cohen. Penguin, 3/6. An interesting and extremely readable examination of the factors which come into play when we gamble. Mascots, ESP, the effect of alcohol, the Monte Carlo fallacy, it is all perfectly fascinating, though it will probably not stop a single pool's coupon from being filled or half-crown from flattering a horse.



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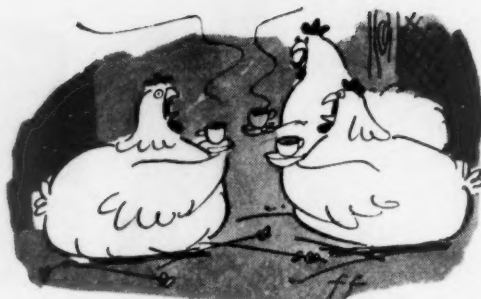
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BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

FOR WOMEN



Pets Among the Petri Dishes

THE life of a biology mistress is not all beer and skittles, or even milk and honey. The great disadvantage of the study of life is that children will be practical about it. "Let's have a pet," they say. "Only a little one. We'll look after it." And that, of course, is where the trouble starts.

When I took up my first post, full of a rather blind enthusiasm, I was delighted to see that the laboratory boasted an aquarium. Or rather, that in the converted church hall, hurriedly fitted with a few benches and a sink or two, ready to train the rising generation of scientists, there stood a large glass tank containing four goldfish and a piece of water-weed. Excellent, I thought; pleasant, soothing, and fashionable into the bargain.

The next step was the logical extension of this. The Biology Club, with mounting enthusiasm, took up fresh-water biology. This meant that, at first on one evening a week, but, as the weather improved, during every fine lunch hour, fervent fishers brought in scores of jam-jars seething with life, and left them, mute and muddy testimony to their efforts, on my bench. More glass tanks were imported. Sticklebacks darted between clumps of gently heaving frog-spawn; diving beetles dived among fleeing water-fleas; and apathetic snails adorned wilting water-weed with gelatinous packets of eggs. Fortunately, the mortality rate was high, and eventually the intake and output became relatively constant.

Then one day I was waylaid by an earnest first-former. Her cousin bred stick insects, she confided. Suppressing a shudder, I expressed benevolent congratulations and passed on. Next morning, opening the large cardboard box left on my bench, I uncovered, in all their repulsive glory, a dozen cataleptic and mercifully small specimens. I thanked the child profusely, gave her

yet another glass tank, and begged her, since she obviously understood the things, to look after them for me. They have proved little trouble, being mainly concerned with moulting at frequent intervals, with a consequent increase in size, so that now they occupy three tanks. They escape only occasionally, and are usually easily recovered, though they have a disconcerting tendency to shed legs.

After this, vaulting ambition really got into its stride. The third form wanted something more lovable—a rabbit or two, they suggested. This I firmly turned down on the score of restricted space, pointing out that where rabbits were concerned, two might be company but soon became a crowd. Finally we compromised on a mouse—one mouse, male. He promptly appeared in the place of honour at the end of my bench, the sticklebacks having been transferred to the last remaining empty windowsill. Here, for the most part, he stays, the third form having been forcibly cured

of taking him into cookery lessons for a treat.

The fourth form, not to be out-done, soon put in their requisition. Rabbits still being banned, they settled for a hamster, now ensconced in cosy but carefully zinc-lined bachelor apartments next to the mouse. He has so far caused only one major incident. Out for his usual constitutional in the mid-morning break, he found an unsuspected hole where the hot-water pipes are boxed in along the skirting board. I returned after break to find a disconsolate fourth and a pile of crumbled biscuit on the floor, hopefully intended to lure him out. Eventually it took the caretaker an hour's noisy effort to take the boxing apart, rescue the wanderer, and put things together again. The hamster, apart from getting a little dusty, was none the worse, but I fear the pipes will never be the same again.

The fifth, firmly headed off from the inevitable rabbits, remained undecided for a time. Some, after I vetoed a parrot, favoured budgerigars or canaries, while others urged the merits of a tortoise. This caused a temporary deadlock, broken by an enterprising soul who had seen some beautiful green lizards in a shop at Clapham Junction. Lizards met with instant approval, and an order was placed immediately at the local pet-shop. At the moment, however, they are out of stock, and the empty reptile house has gone into abeyance among the retort-stands and water-baths in the lean-to outside.

The sixth form remains aloof. Their biology is more practical still, and centres on the Grammar School over the hill.

—BARBARA DOWNING

Lipsticks I Have Known

"WHY ever don't you," said my daughter the other day, "either use up or throw away all these old half-used lipsticks? The dressing-table's stiff with them."

She's right. It is. The trouble is I'm sentimental about the past and each of these old half-used lipsticks represents an era in my life, rather like a Picasso Blue-period or something of that nature.

This mauve Max Factor for instance must date back all of eighteen months. That was when every single thing had to be a pale purple. Lilac Time the glossies called it. I loved that era. The colour suited me and for weeks I went

about feeling happily chic; eyelids, cheeks, nails, lips, all tinged a delicate mauve. Very happily chic until one day my Uncle Gerald, a doctor (quite sweet but hopelessly old-fashioned), said very pointedly that he couldn't for the life of him understand why women actually went out of their way to look as though they were about to drop dead from heart disease. I never felt the same about my mauve tinge after that.

This Pale Pink Arden now. That's easy. That was the following spring when the Natural-Look was in. The big thing was to apply the lipstick so that it looked as though you weren't wearing any. I'm

I afraid I cheated a bit during this era; that's why there's so much of this Pale Pink left. I just used to make-up my face and leave my lips bare. Everyone said the effect was marvellous; they only wished they could get theirs to look so natural.

This Revlon Bright-Orange? Oh yes, I remember it well. I bought it when we were on that gorgeous holiday in Spain. It looked absolutely stunning against my suntan. Then after we came home the autumn winds got cracking and very soon my mouth looked like a strip of orange-peel. I gave it up during the October.

The Rubinstein White came next I think, during the time when all the odds and ends had to be frosted. To get the Frosted-Look about the lips one applied a layer of white lipstick over one's ordinary red one so that the red glowed through the white, giving a silvery effect. The idea was splendid, but I think I must have lashed out with my white a little too enthusiastically because the first time I aired my Frosted-Look the little girl next door asked me if I'd been eating ice cream. The remark shattered my self-confidence. I fled for home and that morning the fridge and I were defrosting at the same time.

The pearly era followed almost immediately but the Iridescent-Look was never *me*. In the shop the lipstick looked perfectly wonderful—a stalagmite of shimmering pearl—but on my lips it just looked like a horrid smear of candle-grease. So that was another era over, ended almost before it had started.

Now, of course, everything's brown. One's lashes, one's lids, one's brows, one's complexion, one's finger-nails, the lot, including of course one's lips; and the new cartridge-case in front of me contains a lipstick tinted the most heavenly milk-chocolate colour. It looks yummy. Gorgeous. I adore it. Looking at it now I can't imagine how I could ever have bothered with all those silly pinks and purples and mauves and oranges and frosted.

And yet—let's face it—sure as *Vogue*, in another two or three months' time another era will start up. Brown will be pronounced passé. And there'll be yet another has-been on my dressing-table.

Meanwhile all these old discarded emblems wastefully remain. I think the only thing to do is make a firm resolution: to scoop out all the remnants, boil them together in a little pan, and use-them-up. With a bit of luck the boiling might even result in a rosy-red, which is, after all, the colour that lips are supposed to be.

— FAITH COLLINS

Convalescence after Casanova

A DIEU and adieu to the fun and the frolic,
The anguish and agony, the dazzled depression;
Mourn for the clinches that ended in colic,
The raptures that ruptured, the vice-like obsession.

"Does he or doesn't he? Bless him and blast him,
Shunting my nerves like a railway truck.
Is there Another? I wouldn't put it past him;
Landing a philanderer is just my luck."

Well, *that's* all over. Gone are the gleaming
Days of delicious, delirious delight;
Gone for good are the doting and the dreaming,
The deaf-mute telephone, the nerve-racked night.

So now I must find something busy to replace it:
Novel-writing, needlework, Nanny round for tea.
It's all very desolate—but honestly, let's face it,
Being in love *exhausted* me.

— PAMELA SINCLAIR



"I reckon we won't be seeing madam for dust after this."

Toby Competitions

No. 133—Hope You Are Well

WRITE a letter home from school (boy or girl) recording first impressions of the new term, peculiarities of staff or school fellows, or anything else the pupil might think would interest the parents. Limit 120 words.

A framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up receive a one-guinea book token. Entries by first post on

Wednesday, October 5. Address to TOBY COMPETITION No. 133, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Toby Competition No. 130 (Something Sinister)

An anecdote beginning "There was something eerie about the buffet that night" was called for. Some odd situations turned up but not as strange as expected. Perhaps 120 words were not enough to build up suspense and reach a strong ending; many

promising beginnings dwindled to a weak finish and others that ended well had made a poor start.

The winner is:

MISS J. S. BENEDICTUS
ADLESTROP PARK SCHOOL
MORETON-IN-MARSH
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

There was something eerie about the buffet that night. The buns were fresh and white; the waitress, who did not appear to think her hair style needed alteration, called me "Madame"; the tables were clean; the ashtrays empty. All was silent inside; from outside came the hiss and clatter of trains arriving and departing with great regularity. A porter entered, removing his cap at the door. He caught my eye, and as he passed my table he nodded briefly at the occupant of a distant seat. "That is Sir Brian," he murmured.

Book tokens for the following:

There was something eerie about the buffet that night. We felt it immediately she come in. An uncanny aura radiated from where she crouched at the counter, staring like a crystal gazer into the depths of a double gin. The disembodied moans began soon afterwards; emitted at brief intervals and never from the same direction. We were petrified; afraid to stay, afraid to leave. The mystic alone was unaffected, and how readily we agreed to co-operate in the exorcizing. Under her direction we all faced eastwards, closed our eyes and chanted "Begone, begone," in rhythmic unison. The moans became weaker and slowly faded away.

By then the mysterious ventriloquist had vanished and so had the contents of the till.

Mrs. Vera Thompson, Flat 11, Dolforgon Court, The Beacon, Exmouth, Devon.

There was something eerie about the buffet that night. The mice, squeaking with delight, were nibbling at the unwrapped pork pies, their beady eyes reflecting strangely in the light of the flickering gas flares. The door screeched each time it swung open and the draught wafted paper wrappings gently around the floor. I doodled idly with my finger in the puddles of tea on the counter, stopping only to flick a bluebottle into one of the lipstick-stained teacups beneath the urn. Suddenly the new assistant behind the counter turned deathly pale and with a low cry sank on to a stool. She had just drunk her first cup of railway coffee.

A. R. Fuller, 34 Weymouth Bay Avenue, Weymouth, Dorset.

Book tokens also to: M. J. Selkirk, 52 Edlington Lane, Warmsworth, Doncaster; T. J. C. Dennis, 17 Inverleith Place, Edinburgh 3; Mrs. B. Brocklesby, 83 St. John's Road, Oxford.



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